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THE GENESIS OF DRAMATIC SATIRE AGAINST THE PURITAN, AS ILLUSTRATED IN *A KNACK TO KNOW A KNAVE*¹

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A Knack to Know a Knafe, c.1592, is the earliest extant play containing specific and, in terms of later development, conventionalized satire against the Puritan. Why dramatic protest should arise so late is a matter of not very profitable speculation; but the attacks upon the stage in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, both in the pamphlet war and by official regulatory legislation, were in part due to economic and social causes and were, even in their theological origins, not exclusively Puritan.² The particular incentive for the anonymous author of *A Knack to Know a Knafe* was presumably furnished by the Martin Marprelate tracts of 1588 and 1589, which produced a flood of vigorous, if less clever, rejoinders in both pamphlets and plays.³ It is probable that *A Knack* is one of two surviving Martinist plays, its survival being due to the comparative

¹ Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt (London, 1874), vol. vi. All references are to this edition.

² For full accounts of the controversy see E. N. S. Thompson, *The Controversy between the Puritans and the Stage* (New York, 1903); E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford, 1923); J. Dover Wilson, 'The Puritan Attack upon the Stage', *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (New York, 1933), vol. vi; William Ringler, *Stephen Gosson: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Princeton, 1942), chap. iv; William Ringler, 'The First Phase of the Elizabethan Attack on the Stage, 1558-1579', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, v, 391-418 (July, 1942). Mr. Ringler takes issue with the standard authorities in regard to the beginning date of the controversy, asserting that real opposition did not begin until 1577, when the commercialization consequent upon the building of the Theatre and the Curtain raised new and pressing problems; and in regard to the source of the early opposition, which he considers to have been mainly social and economic rather than Puritan or theological.

³ See William Pierce, *An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts* (London, 1908); Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. i, pp. 261, 294-5; E. N. S. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-204.

mildness of its satire.¹ Though the outburst of the players was short-lived, measures of repression soon having been taken against their too exuberant response,² the impetus was never wholly dissipated. Even in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign incidental allusions derogatory to the Puritans occurred in a number of plays; for example, in Shakespeare's first and second *Henry IV*, *Merry Wives*, and *Twelfth Night*, and in Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*. Chapman's *An Humorous Day's Mirth* (1597) made an extended attack in the person of one of the most important characters, the Puritan wife of Count Labervele. The harsh measures taken against the Puritans after the accession of Whitgift to the Primacy, especially the culminating severity of 1593, when failure to attend the established church became an offence punishable by imprisonment, or, in extreme cases, by banishment, was at least a tacit encouragement to derision of the Puritan. The great outburst in drama came, of course, after James had passionately inveighed against the Puritans at the Hampton Court Conference and had formulated the policy which before the end of 1604 had ejected three hundred Puritan ministers from their livings. The lines of the struggle, ominous as it was to prove to James's son, were then sharply drawn—so sharply that no dramatist need fear the wrath of James, no matter how frequent or how bitter his invective against nonconformists of all sects.

By reason of its early position in a long sequence of plays on the subject of Puritanism, *A Knack to Know a Knav*e is of considerable importance, even though the Puritan element is only one in a medley of interests which tend to obscure its significance. The other elements include the romantic story concerning King Edgar and the beautiful Alfrida, basically an old folk tale; traces of the morality in the allegorical character Honesty; current social criticism through the medium of dialogues between the King and good Bishop Dunstan on the state of the kingdom, and mainly through the deliberate efforts of Honesty, acting under instructions from Edgar, to punish all sorts of evil in the realm. The action significant for my purpose centres upon Honesty's exposure of the Bailiff of Hexham and his four sons, in their several persons exemplifying the prevailing vices: a farmer, a coneycatcher, a courtier, and a priest. The satire against the Puritans is comprised in the portraiture of the Priest, who obviously, if not very convincingly, is intended for a Puritan.

In some respects, though a relatively obscure play, *A Knack to Know a Knav*e has not been denied its share of critical attention. Tucker Brooke, assigning it a place as a transitional interlude, comments upon it briefly as a medley of 'interlude, mythical history, and comedy of manners'.³

¹ E. N. S. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

³ *The Tudor Drama* (Boston, 1911), p. 141.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 119-20, 198.

Louis B. Wright discusses it as a significant example of the development of the late morality, which became a vehicle for social propaganda and thus established useful methods for later secular drama.¹ E. N. S. Thompson, recognizing in it two prominent traces of the morality (the allegorical character Honesty and the entrance of the Devil in one scene), sums it up as a combination of earlier influences remote and immediate: 'realistic comedy combined with a typical Elizabethan romance, bearing the marks of Euphuism in its language, and staged by Henslowe—in short, a typical Elizabethan play, preserving still the relics of the morality type'.² By its major analysts, then, *A Knack to Know a Knave* is seen to represent a culmination of streams of influence from the headwaters of the Middle Ages, heightened by tributaries carrying newer forces, secular and religious, of the sixteenth century.

Even in what may be called its forward-looking aspects, the play has received scrutiny. It has been recognized, in its position as the earliest extant dramatic satire against the Puritans, as establishing the conventional stage Puritan. E. N. S. Thompson analyzes the Priest briefly to point out certain characteristics that are obviously 'badges of the dramatized Puritan'.³ A. M. Myers likewise comments upon a 'true Puritan character under the caption "priest", who has most of the earmarks of the later stage Puritan'.⁴ Both critics, as indeed any critic must, point to hypocrisy as the distinguishing characteristic of the Priest, Myers making the additional remark that *A Knack* is the first of numerous plays, Jonson's particularly, to picture Puritans as dishonest rogues operating under the guise of piety.⁵

It is in the analysis and interpretation of the Puritan Priest that *A Knack to Know a Knave* warrants further investigation. Up till now there seems to have been no attempt to explain his origin. He springs half-grown, shall we say, from Martin Marprelate's enemies, but there is no omnipotent and omniscient Jupiter to explain his prodigious birth. According to critical dicta, he is recognizable primarily in what later plays were to establish as the chief stigmata of the Puritans, both lay and clerical; but the more interesting question of how those stigmata arose has been ignored. It is that question which it is my purpose to answer—out of reasonable inference, if in the absence of absolute proof. In my belief the origin of the stock Puritan character as he persisted through five decades of dramatic representation is to be found in medieval literature. Like other elements of *A Knack to Know a Knave*, the Puritan element stems

¹ 'Social Aspects of Some Belated Moralities', *Anglia*, LIV, 109, 141-2 (1930).

² 'The English Moral Plays', *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, XIV, 399 (March, 1910).

³ *The Controversy between the Puritans and the Stage*, p. 200.

⁴ *Representation and Misrepresentation of the Puritan in Elizabethan Drama* (Philadelphia, 1931), p. 115.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.

from the Middle Ages. When the opportunity arose to attack a troublesome antagonist, the dramatist found ready to his hand a literary tradition already conventionalized, even if we grant the essential truth inherent in the socio-religious criticism from the thirteenth century onward. In short, in his two major traits—hypocrisy and avarice—the stage Puritan was as conventionalized in origin as he was to become in the fuller characterization accorded him by later dramatic treatment.¹ Such origin I hope to demonstrate, first by an analysis of the Priest and a comparison with such a well-known figure as Chaucer's Pardoner; and secondly by a series of illustrations drawn from medieval and sixteenth-century literature.

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It must be admitted that in his principal characteristics the Priest is recognizable as a Puritan mainly because he is called one. If we except the minor traits which are inseparable from the Puritans in later drama, the chief evidence is afforded by the Priest's own comment upon himself and his brethren (p. 519):

Thus do we blind the world with holiness,
And so by that are termed pure Precisions,

and by such designations as *pureness* or *precise* applied to him by his father (p. 517), a beggar to whom he refuses alms (p. 580), and Honesty (p. 585). The dramatist having thus branded him, however, the reader with historical perspective at once recognizes in him the smugly hypocritical, grasping rogue that represents the worst, and the usual, in the stage Puritan.

Of his two major vices, hypocrisy is emphasized more than avarice,² though the two are to some degree inseparable and though the chief value in his assumption of virtue is the favourable opportunity it offers for sharp dealing. The basis of his actions, as laid down by his father and affirmed by himself, is hypocrisy: he is to inveigh against sinfulness and secretly to do whatever self-interest dictates, especially in the acquisition of money; he is to maintain a 'goodly outside' that may cover any number of private vices. Three incidents in the play are of value in establishing the Priest's hypocrisy and, by implication, avarice as well.

¹ It is beyond my scope to analyze or account for minor traits that mark this early Puritan as clearly, if not as fully, as Puritans in later plays: the devout practices, accompanied by insistence on the literal acceptance of the Scriptures; the semi-scriptural vocabulary of the earnest Puritans, called by their enemies their 'canting speech'; even, in two allusions, the all-powerful influence of the 'Spirit'. In my belief the origin of these is to be sought in contemporary life, and will form part of a later study in which I hope to trace the expansion of dramatic satire against the Puritan.

² The reversal of the relative emphasis upon hypocrisy and avarice is perhaps one indication that the play, though dependent upon medieval tradition, is marking out a new line of approach. The stage Puritan is invariably a hypocrite; he is not always, although often, avaricious.

Upon his death-bed the Bailiff of Hexham carefully instructs his sons in the ways of the world, pointing out courses of action appropriate to their several occupations.¹ He thus enjoins the Priest (p. 517):

Thou must, my son, make show of holiness;
And blind the world with thy hypocrisy.

If he has had any fears for the future of his clerical son, once his own guiding influence is removed, they should be dispelled by the reception of the advice. The Priest assures his father that he is already living according to the practices enjoined upon him, that he and his brethren preach very vigorously upon both doctrinal and ethical matters, though, he hastens to add, ' . . . in our heart we never mean the thing' (p. 519).

The most extended example (pp. 578-81) is furnished by the Priest's negotiations with a neighbour, a prospective tenant. The neighbour can afford to pay only thirty shillings a year, but offers the cogent argument that his payments will be prompt and sure. The Priest demands the higher rental of forty shillings, at the same time denouncing usury, insisting that he will make no profit from so small a sum, and asserting that he could easily get more except for his hatred of exaction. The Priest's tactics are at least morally successful. The neighbour does not agree to pay the forty shillings, presumably because he cannot, but he deplores his inability to do so and ends his part of the colloquy with a compliment to the Priest upon the excellence of the last sermon. The Priest then announces his departure upon another business matter, referring to it rather vaguely as a 'farm that I should have'. Throughout this scene Honesty and a beggar, acting at intervals as an emphatic chorus, assail both the hypocrisy and the 'hard dealing' of the Priest.

The most scathing indictment is made by Honesty, who, having duly exposed the dishonesty in the kingdom, is allowed by King Edgar to pass sentence on all the rogues, the Priest among them (p. 590):

You shall, for abusing the blessed word of God,
And mocking the divine order of ministry,
Whereby you have led the ignorant into errors,
You, I say,
As you were shameless in your shameful dealing,
Shall, to your shame, and the utter shame of all
Bad-minded men, that live as thou hast done,
Stand in Finsbury fields, near London,
And there, as a dissembling hypocrite, be shot to death.

Perhaps, in relation to avarice, brief attention should be paid to the Priest's own revelation of his business policies (pp. 577-8). Just before his interview with the neighbour, he soliloquizes about a recent request

¹ Louis B. Wright (*op. cit.*, p. 142, n. 1) comments that the passages between the Bailiff and his four sons are simply cony-catching exposures in dramatic form.

of a friend for a small loan. The friend is a kinsman, a fellow clergyman, and a man so honest that presumably he might well be trusted for a twelvemonth instead of the one month he has asked for. There is every reason to lend the money freely and unconditionally. But both inclination and experience argue against generosity:

... I have learn'd the best assurance a man can have
In such a matter is a good pawn of twice the value,
Or bonds sufficient for five times the quantity.

Cupidity, even on a small scale, triumphs; the Priest will borrow
His gelding to ride to the term, and keep away a just fortnight.
If then he pay me money, I will deliver him his horse.

A more striking example (pp. 586-7) is the Priest's attempt to get a license from the King to 'carry tin, lead, wool, and broadcloths beyond seas'. He seeks the help of Honesty, believing him to have influence at court. A measure of how profitable such export privileges would prove is his offer of a bribe to Honesty of a hundred pounds. Honesty, in accordance with his mission, straightway reports to the King, whose stinging rebuke is a final summation of the Priest's evil character:

Fie, graceless man! hast thou no fear of God,
To withhold thee from these lawless motions?
Why, thou shouldst be as [a] messenger of God,
And hate deceit and wicked avarice:
But thou art one of those whom God doth hate,
And thy vild deeds will witness 'gainst thy soul.

Sketchy as is the Puritan portraiture, it is unmistakable to the reader of the present, and must have been equally unmistakable to the Elizabethan playgoer. One wonders, indeed, if the verisimilitude was not the plainer to the Elizabethan because of long-standing popular tradition. If the Priest is viewed without his specific Puritan label, he is the type of clergyman that had been the object of satire for several centuries. In his main outlines he is clearly reminiscent of Chaucer's Pardoner, displaying the same consuming sin of avarice and the same skill in concealing it from most of the people he meets. Compare the Bailiff's advice to him, which we must remember he accedes to heartily as conforming to an already established practice:

And sometime give a penny to the poor,
But let it be in the church or market-place,
That men may praise thy liberality.
Speak against usury, yet forsake no pawns,
So thou may'st gain three shillings in the pound.
Warn thou the world from sin and vile excess,
And now and then speak against drunkenness:
So by this means thou shalt be termed wise,
And with thy pureness blind the people's eyes,

with the Pardoner's explanation of his own methods:

Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne,
That it is joye to see my businesse.
Of avaryce and of swich cursednesse
Is al my preching, . . .
For my entente is nat but for to winne,
And no-thing for correccioun of sinne . . .
Thus can I preche agayn that same vyce
Which that I use, and that is avaryce.
But, though my-self be gilty in that sinne,
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
From avaryce, and sore to repente.
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no-thing but for coveityse.¹

iii

To trace the Priest's line of descent from medieval criticism of the clergy is not easy. One must admit at the outset that avarice and hypocrisy are not limited to one class or one time. Among the classical satirists both vices are among the objects of attack.² And native English satire which must be called social rather than religious also included avarice and hypocrisy among the considerable body of evils almost invariably condemned.³ The medieval habit of assailing social evil through the enumeration and application of the Seven Deadly Sins, prominent among which was Avarice, must be taken into account. Another difficulty lies in the attempt to separate social from religious criticism, for in a very real sense they are not separable: much of the disapproval of the wealth of the clergy arose from the contrasting wretchedness of the poor, who in the several centuries under consideration were the victims of economic changes beyond their control, whether those changes were the growth of commerce, the system of enclosures, or the social problems consequent upon the dissolution of the monasteries. And, finally, I am aware of the difficulties of establishing plausible evidence—especially within the small compass desirable, lest I be accused of using a sledge hammer to kill a gnat—on grounds that require a great deal of proof. Assuming the burden, though not the solution, of such difficulties, I rest my case upon three main arguments: the establishment in medieval literature of the type of cleric represented by the Priest in *A Knack to Know a Knav*; the use, in the bitter partisanship of the sixteenth-century religious struggle, made by

¹ *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. W. W. Skeat (London, 1931), p. 557.

² See R. M. Alden, *The Rise of Formal Satire in England* (Philadelphia, 1899), pp. 32-7, for detailed discussion of Juvenal, Horace, and Persius, the three Latin satirists who exerted specific influence upon English satire.

³ See R. M. Alden, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-32 *passim*, for the inclusion of hypocrisy and avarice in social satire like that of the extensive Fools literature, that in the *Piers Plowman* tradition, and numerous miscellaneous poems.

all factions of the same methods and materials; and, lastly, the obvious inapplicability of the Puritan portraiture to the Puritan preacher of the 1580's or 1590's.

The conception of the clergy as either openly vicious or as concealing their sin and worldliness under hypocritical piety may be found both in popular literature, generally in the form of satire, and in the earnest clergyman's reproach of his own order. Among the popular writings the work of Chaucer and, secondarily, of Langland is likely to be most familiar. Chaucer's Pardoner, of course, represents the most striking combination of avarice and hypocrisy; his Friar and Summoner are described in the Prologue as forthright knaves, though in the tales, in which the two attack each other, the summoner is shown primarily as avaricious and the friar as hypocritical. In *Piers Plowman* there is sharp criticism of the wealth of the Church and the greed of the clergy; the friars of all four orders

Preched þe peple for profit of hem-seluen,
Glosed þe gospel as hem good lyked,
For coueitise of copis construed it as þei wolde.¹

Parsons and parish priests, complaining of the poverty of their parishes 'sith þe pestilence tyme', begged the bishop

To haue a lycence and a leue at London to dwelle,
And syngen þere for symonye for siluer is swete.²

The friar who received Mede's confession advised her that she would be surer of heaven if she would glaze a church window and engrave her name there; Mede 'apoysonde' popes and injured holychurch; such people as sizars and summoners praised her.³ The scope of Langland's satire is much more sweeping than these few illustrations would indicate, and naturally the poet attacks evil practice not directly related to avarice and hypocrisy. And yet the wealth of the Church, with the consequent temptation to worldliness and sin, is the chief basis of criticism. The central issue for Langland is the problem of poverty, which on the negative side involves a failure of two of the basic requirements of the Christian life, justice and charity, and, on the positive, an appreciation of the meaning of poverty for the social aspects of the Christian life.⁴ The 'Piers' literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries continues the assault upon the friars and the hypocrisy of their pretensions to poverty. Miss White points out that its criticism of the friars was merely continuation of an ancient theme.⁵

¹ William Langland, *The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman*, ed. W. W. Skeat (Oxford, 1924; tenth edition, revised), Prologue, ll. 59-61. References are to the B-text. ² *Ibid.*, Prologue, ll. 85-6. ³ *Ibid.*, pass. iii, ll. 39ff., 127, 133.

⁴ Helen C. White, *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1944), p. 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-7. See also pp. 24-35 for discussion of individual examples of the 'Piers' literature.

The sin of avarice, pride, and less often hypocrisy is the theme of a host of poems, Latin and English, extending from the thirteenth through the fifteenth century.¹ In some the attack is directed solely against the clergy; in numerous poems each entitled 'Song on the Times', in the reigns of Henry III, Edward I, and Henry VI, the clergy come in for marked if not exclusive criticism. One called 'Song on the Corruptions of the Time', dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century, notes particularly the pride and avarice of the prelates: 'Rome teaches all . . . that they should offer heart and hand to Mammon rather than to God.'² 'The Song of the Church', 'A Song against the Bishops', 'A Song on the Times', all of about the middle of the thirteenth century, make substantially the same accusation, the third noting that many of the prelates do evil under the mask of good and often cause more injury than the laymen.³ 'Song against the Friars', dating from the late fourteenth century, after a few ironic lines on the piety of the friars, changes to direct criticism.

I have lyved now fourty yers,
And fatter men about the neres
Ȝit sawe I never then are these frers⁴.

'The Complaint of the Ploughman', of the Chaucerian apocrypha, though it is an attack on all the clergy, condemns both the avarice and the hypocrisy of the priests, in a long passage of contrast between what they preach and what they do.⁵ 'Jacke Upland' (1401) is a violent assault by one of the Wycliffite party on the friars: they are hypocrites and they are avaricious; they not only care nothing for the poor but are guilty of swindling and extortion.⁶ Later in the fifteenth century 'Against the Friars' makes the same charges:

Mony-makers I trow thei be,
regis proditores,
Therfore ylle mowyth thei thee,
*falsi deceptores.*⁷

Though general complaints are made against the corruption of the Church, the chief targets are the regular clergy, especially the friars. Judging by them alone and remembering Chaucer's 'povre Persoun', one might conclude that the unfavourable portraiture was almost exclusively of them. And in fact the monastic and mendicant orders, in the sharp contrast between their vow of poverty and their great wealth, were both a better and a truer target than the ordinary parish priest. The pulpit

¹ Thomas Wright, ed., *The Political Songs of England* (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1839) and *Political Poems and Songs* (London: the Rolls Series, 1859, 1861, 2 vols.). The three volumes cover the periods from the reign of John to the accession of Richard III.

² *Political Songs*, p. 31. Translation by Wright.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48. Translation by Wright. See pp. 42-51 for the text of the poems.

⁴ *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, p. 264.

⁵ *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, pp. 314, 318-9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 19ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 250.

literature of the Middle Ages, however, reveals a considerable criticism of the priest which derives not only from the preaching friars and the monks, as might be expected,¹ but from the secular clergy themselves.² Prefatory to a long list of examples, G. R. Owst states that the 'secular clergy, rectors, vicars, distinguished preachers at the city crosses and others, whose sermons and manuals remain to us, are themselves no more eulogistic about their own order, no more hopeful about the state of the Church and the world in general, than those who loved to criticize them from opposite camps'.³ He quotes from a manuscript of Latin sermons which affirm that 'the priests of modern time . . . deserve to be called, not priests of God, but the priests of Dagon in their avarice, . . . priests of Baal in their pride, . . .',⁴ and, on the specific subject of clerical avarice, that 'neither greater nor less, for the most part, are content with their possessions, their status or their rank . . . they strive to appear more stately than kings in secular pomp. . . tithes, oblations and the other revenues of their livings they call "their own incomes"'.⁵ Sermon 'exempla' likewise attack the greed of the clergy as well as of the laity.⁶ The preachers, like the authors of popular poems and songs, considered 'pride and avarice, or the rush for wealth, . . . amongst the most prominent vices of the churchmen'.⁷ It is hard to say, continues Mr. Owst, whether Avarice 'and her many-sided activities give more scope to the preachers or to the poets of satire'.⁸ Nor are the hypocrites among the clergy neglected, though, as in most of the medieval literature, hypocrisy is as a rule indicted by implication only or subordinately to the greater vice of greed. John Bromyard, a Dominican preacher whom Mr. Owst cites frequently, has a good deal to say about the 'foxy' type of scheming hypocrites, 'to be found first and foremost among unpromoted clerics, or those who desire higher promotion. . .'.⁹ It is impossible within the imposed limitation of space to cite other examples or to reproduce Mr. Owst's brilliant arguments for the close interrelation of the sermons and popular literature; indeed, for the determining influence which the pulpit homilies exerted upon the

¹ R. M. Alden, *The Rise of Formal Satire in England*, p. 4, in pointing out that medieval satire arose not from classical traditions but from contemporary life, notes that 'from the first it was particularly severe upon the avarice and luxury of those who professed to be models of righteousness. The various orders of ecclesiastics aimed at one another's weaknesses.'

² Whether Wyclif is to be noted as an exception or not, Miss White, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3, comments that 'the prelates remain second only to the friars in the book of his wrath', and further emphasizes his attack on the friars: ' . . . on the most classic themes where one would have thought that there was little room for special pleading, Wyclif manages to bring in the two main objects of his attack, the pope and the friars'.

³ *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 278.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 280. One might hazard a guess that Ben Jonson had read this sermon, or its counterpart in his own day. Zeal-of-the-Land Busy's preaching at Bartholomew Fair is very similar.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

poets.¹ The important thing for my purposes is to show that in both pulpit and song the English people were afforded graphic portraits of various ecclesiastics, the outlines sharply drawn, the pattern set for the continuing use to be made of it in the drama of the sixteenth century.

The morality and the interlude, important mediums for the religious controversy that raged for the last two-thirds of that century, reveal the impact of the struggle through their partisan spirit—it is no longer irreligion as such that is under attack, but the evil of a particular faction—and through new personifications, such as Perverse Doctrine and Light of the Gospel, necessitated by the schism. The old favourites remain, Avarice and Hypocrisy prominent as ever, of which each play makes almost identical use, regardless of the religious belief represented. I have selected four for discussion—the Catholic play *Respublica* and three Protestant plays of varying dates and varying degrees of feeling: John Bale's *The Three Lawes*, *New Custom* by an unknown author, and Nathaniel Woodes' *The Conflict of Conscience*.²

Though *Respublica*, 1553, is more obviously political than religious, the two aspects are hardly separable, the religious being emphasized at least by implication. *Respublica* is the Commonwealth of Engiand, suffering under the depredations of four evil counsellors (disguised as to name and deceitful as to purpose) who during the last two reigns have injured the Church and the State. In the end, after Verity exposes the true nature of the four rogues, Nemesis, who stands for Queen Mary, remands them for custody or punishment and saves the realm. Among the wicked counsellors is Avarice, who to further his designs takes the name of Policy. In his own person he stands for both Avarice and Hypocrisy, which as a separate character does not enter into the play. Adulation, whose name must also be changed, puts in his bid for the name Policy, evidently recognizing its advantages. A quarrel ensues, and finally the compromise name of Honesty is settled upon for Adulation. At the time of its adoption it, as well as Policy, offers scope for hypocrisy, but at the end of the play it serves a partisan purpose: Adulation truly repents of his former ways, and, forgiven by Mercy, serves *Respublica* as sincerely as before he has been false. The Catholic view is finally summed up by Nemesis:

Now, darling *Respublica*! ye are in th' old good estate;
And they taken away that spoiled you of late.³

¹ Nor to what Mr. Owst considers the indubitable influence upon medieval drama. The expanded vernacular play he calls 'a product of the great homiletic revival of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', which 'incessantly . . . derives fresh life and matter from this wider source of supply around it . . . the medieval pulpit is a long-forgotten foster-mother of our modern stage' (p. 547).

² The Catholic view is less frequently represented than the Protestant, presumably because of the ascendancy of Protestant sentiment; and the Protestant plays vary sufficiently in zeal and in factional implications to require several examples.

³ *Lost Tudor Plays*, ed. John S. Farmer (London, 1907), p. 272.

Bale's *The Three Laws*, dated 1538 but probably, at least in some parts, of later origin,¹ is the earliest and most extreme of the Protestant plays. From first to last it hurls bitter invective at the Catholic church. The three laws—of nature, of Moses, of Christ—are corrupted by Infidelity, the embodiment of evil which is sometimes generalized but more often is particularized as the evil of the Papacy. *Deus Pater* assigns to the three laws a period of guardianship over mankind, but each is subverted by agents of Infidelity, all of whom reveal some affiliation with Rome. In the end God cleanses the laws of their infection and restores them to their original purity. Avarice and Hypocrisy are important in the subversive process. The Prologue of the play asserts that Infidelity corrupts the law of nature

. . . with ydolles, and stynkyng Sodometry,
The lawe of Moses, with Auaryce and Ambycyon,
He also poluteth. And euer continually,
Christes lawe he defyleth, with cursed hypocresy,
And with false doctryne.²

In the acts of the play given over to the corruption of the law of Moses and of Christ, Avarice and Hypocrisy make their familiar claims and act with their customary success. They serve an important didactic purpose in demonstrating the evils of Catholicism.

New Custom, printed in 1573 but perhaps a few years earlier in composition, was written 'purposely to vindicate and promote the Reformation'.³ *New Custom* and *Light of the Gospel* are Protestant ministers, late of Geneva, who are so bitterly feared and hated by Perverse Doctrine and Ignorance, of the old faith, that the latter enlist the aid of Hypocrisy, Avarice, and Cruelty to injure the upstarts. In the end, not only do their evil plans fail, but they are converted to the true belief. The Protestant satirist is ingenious enough to eat his cake and have it too. Anti-Catholic sentiment is put into the mouths of *New Custom* and *Light of the Gospel*, as one would expect, and in addition Perverse Doctrine and Ignorance, in their candid moments, acknowledge the validity of the Protestant claims.

The Conflict of Conscience, printed in 1581, makes use of both the abstractions of the morality and some individualized characters. The central interest is the soul of Philologus, a devout Protestant. He is finally seduced into Catholicism by the power of Sensual Suggestion, though Avarice is potent also—in fact, it is material goods rather than sensual dissipation in the usual sense that Suggestion offers as inducement. Once a Catholic, he is unhappy, but evil power is at hand to make it impossible for him to

¹ See Tucker Brooke, *The Tudor Drama*, p. 87.

² *Anglia*, v, 161 (1882). The complete text of the play is printed in this volume, pp. 160-223.

³ *Dodsley's Old Plays*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, vol. III, 'Dodsley's Preface', p. 3.

receive God again with a pure heart, and the struggle to save his soul is difficult and prolonged. In the end he is both comforted and saved by good Protestant doctrine. The guiding genius of the play is Satan, who recognizes both his debt and his obligation to the Pope, his 'darling dear', his 'eldest boy'.¹ The Pope's stout champions are Avarice and Tyrannical Practice, but they find Hypocrisy indispensable. It is Hypocrisy who carries out Satan's policy with a firm hand; Avarice and Tyranny, though intractable to others, are generally amenable to Hypocrisy's suggestions.

It is interesting to note the emerging importance of Hypocrisy over Avarice. In Bale's play the two may be considered of roughly the same importance; each corrupts one of the laws. In *Respublica* Avarice is superficially more important, but if we consider the implications in the assumed names *Policy* and *Honesty* the distinction is seen to be more apparent than real. In *New Custom* Hypocrisy both explicitly and inferentially is of great importance, even assuming the controlling direction of Avarice.² The presence of both abstractions is symptomatic of the evil in Catholicism. There was no hypocrisy in the primitive church, of which New Custom rather than the Catholics is a true representative. It is the greed of Rome that has given such ample scope for Hypocrisy. In *The Conflict of Conscience* hypocrisy has assumed the lead over avarice that it is to maintain through the succession of dramatic satires against the Puritan. And when we come to *A Knack to Know a Knave*, almost at the end of the century, the hypocrisy which has been in turn the hallmark of the Catholic and the Protestant has become the distinguishing characteristic of the Puritan.

Finally, is there any ground for asserting that the Puritan Priest in *A Knack to Know a Knave* arose from real life instead of from an already conventionalized tradition? In my belief there is none. Though satire would defeat its purpose if it made an attempt at strict justice, one looks for the kernel of truth in the essential exaggeration. In the Puritan Priest is no such kernel; there is truth only in the outward wrappings, in the superficially absurd mannerisms that enabled satirists even as chronologically distant as Samuel Butler to whet the edge of ridicule against them. With such external attributes this paper is not concerned; they are of interest here mainly in helping to identify the Priest as a Puritan.

Nothing could be farther from the truth than to characterize the Puritan preacher by the basic qualities of hypocrisy and avarice. By the end of the century less manifestation of piety, rather than more, would have been the policy of expedience. Naturally the preachers with Puritan leanings were not alone in their Protestant zeal—there were earnest

¹ *Dodsley's Old Plays*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, vol. vi, p. 37.

² *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 17.

Anglican conformists—but they were under a heavier burden of conscience; they, unlike the strict Anglicans, were not content with the existing order; they were striving, at considerable risk to themselves, towards an ideal. They might with truth be compared to the early Christians; religious hypocrisy battens on prosperity, not on adversity and scorn. Obviously the charge of avarice is equally unfounded. Even if, mindful of his hostages to fortune, a minister chose to hold his tongue rather than lose his pulpit, such a step might be called a compromise with economic necessity, but certainly not avarice.

It is of significance, however, that the Puritan caricatured in *A Knack to Know a Knave* is a minister and not a layman. Against the latter a charge of avarice might be brought with at least a semblance of justification. The Puritans must not be completely identified with the rising commercial and industrialized middle class; but there was a close interrelation, and in the minds of their adversaries the identity seemed entire instead of partial. R. H. Tawney comments that 'the identification of the industrial and commercial classes with religious radicalism was, indeed, a constant theme of Anglicans and Royalists',¹ and quotes a hostile seventeenth-century critic as asserting that the growth of Puritanism was 'by meanes of the City of London (the nest and seminary of the seditious faction) and by reason of its universal trade throughout the kingdome, with its commodities conveying and deriving this civill contagion to all our cities and corporations, and thereby poysoning whole counties'.² Dramatists took the same view. The London merchants particularly were both prosperous enough and thrifty enough to become fair targets, and in early seventeenth-century plays they were repeatedly accused of greed so insatiable that in their business dealings they often combined the two extremes of penny-pinching and dishonest practices on a considerable scale. Witness the deceased Citizen Plus in *The Puritaine*, Sir Moth Interest in *The Magnetic Lady*, Touchstone in *Eastward Ho*, Dame Purecraft in *Bartholomew Fair*; and numerous incidental allusions in these and other plays that reflect the same attitude. Such plays, though abounding in exaggeration, came closer to reality in their portraiture than did *A Knack to Know a Knave*—a fact which to my mind is of value in establishing its conventional origin.

As has been said, the sum of critical consideration of this play is that it is typically a product of native growth.³ To it may be added one more transitional aspect than has been accorded it hitherto. In its contemporary

¹ *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York, 1926), p. 204.

² *Ibid.*, p. 203. Both comments refer to a later period than that under discussion in this paper, but apply equally to the earlier.

³ This study has been concerned with the subject-matter and not the form of satire, but it may be of interest to note that in its development as satire *A Knack to Know a Knave* is clearly following the native tradition. See Alden, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-51.

religious satire, as well as in its social criticism and its dependence on the morality, it is in the clear line of medieval tradition. If some of the lost Martinist plays, or others whose former existence is unsuspected, were available for study, *A Knack to Know a Knave* might lose something in significance. In their absence it becomes a sixteenth-century Janus, occupying a position of considerable importance as incorporating in its Puritan priest vices prominently assigned to the medieval clergy and establishing the pattern of satire against the Puritan, both lay and clerical, which later dramatists were to elaborate and expand, but not essentially to change.

TIMON OF ATHENS: A RECONSIDERATION

By A. S. COLLINS

The continued neglect and misunderstanding of *Timon of Athens* is a puzzle.¹ Not all critics have wanted appreciation of its qualities and merits. Hazlitt said that '*Timon of Athens* always appeared to us to be written with as intense a feeling of his subject as any one play of Shakespeare'. Saintsbury called it 'the most Shakespearean of all plays not greatest'. But those who have approved it have been few. Extremes of judgment are by no means uncommon even from the best critics, and not least so in recent years, as when Sir Edmund Chambers suggested that the play must have been written 'under conditions of mental and perhaps physical stress, which led to a breakdown'. Yet *Timon of Athens* is a play which one might have expected our day, particularly the recent decades, to see very clearly and appreciatively. It is such a satire upon a cold-hearted commercial community, fearfully reinforcing its security by a heartless legalism, as Mr. W. H. Auden might well have envied. Its teaching, that although the head must rule the heart, yet in the heart lies the essential truth of personal relationships and thereby the health of the state, is the teaching Mr. E. M. Forster has had so much in mind to reawaken us to. Nevertheless, the general run of criticism has been against it. 'It is a dull failure which contains some speeches of passionate genius'.² It is 'an unsuccessful attempt'. Commonly it is declared, without hesitation, to be incoherent, though to Hazlitt it is one of the few plays in which Shakespeare 'seems to be in earnest throughout, never to trifle nor go out of his way'. Critics continue to find the lack of individual characterisation, especially in Timon himself, a marked defect.³ Perhaps it is the disappointment aroused by expecting the usual Shakespearean characterisation that has made it less easy for critics to discover a unity in the play, and hence the various speculations of earlier critics as to an earlier play,

¹ Criticism unfavourable to the play has so far perhaps culminated in the examination of it by Una Ellis-Fermor in 'Timon of Athens: an Unfinished Play' (*R.E.S.*, July 1942), where she argues that the play is 'unfinished in conception' and raises the question whether *Timon* survives against Shakespeare's intention. The summary dismissal of it by M. R. Ridley in *Shakespeare's Plays* (1937) and by Middleton Murry in *Shakespeare* (1936) seems fairly typical of the dissatisfaction it inspires. The treatment by Peter Alexander, however, in *Shakespeare's Life and Art* (1938) stands apart on the other side.

² John Bailey, *Shakespeare*, p. 177.

³ Mark Van Doren in *Shakespeare* (London, 1941) is one, however, who brings out the abstract nature of the play and the symbolical nature of Timon. But he, too, is unable to approve the structure of the play: 'the play is two plays, casually joined in the middle'.

partly revised by Shakespeare, and perhaps supplemented by some contemporary dramatist. Particularly, critics seem to have been driven to the conclusion that it is, to an exceptional extent, unfinished.

Mr. Middleton Murry calls *Timon of Athens* 'a very strange play indeed'. Certainly it is an unusual experiment of Shakespeare's, even if, with Saintsbury, we admit it to be 'the most Shakespearean of all plays not the greatest'. But 'even if' is illogical. It is very Shakespearean partly because it is so unusual an experiment, for it is of the very essence of Shakespeare to experiment. Dr. Johnson, speaking of Shakespeare at work within a play, passed the great comment: 'What he does best, he soon ceases to do.'¹ It is a remark capable of the widest application to his work as a whole. He began with one experiment after another: the topical anti-Raleigh problem play of *Love's Labour's Lost*, the Roman farce out-farced of *The Comedy of Errors*, the romantic tragi-comedy of *The Two Gentlemen*, the four-stranded *Dream*, with love, and fairies, and mechanicals, and ducal marriage. Similarly, in history he went from the *Henry VI* plays to the Marlovian *Richard III*, and then on, but never settling to one form of history play. He would sometimes indulge in a run of rather similar plays, but if *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* are closely similar, they are also very different, and *Much Ado* is more different still. The great tragedies vary more than they resemble one another, *Macbeth* isolated in its rare concentration. In fact, the unending variety of his dramatic experiments is so obvious that it should be easy to see that, if *Timon* is the most striking of his experiments, it is by that all the more surely Shakespeare's, a bold departure typical of him and not of any other. Could any play more clearly declare its deliberate intention to be different? There is really no characterisation in the usual sense, except in Alcibiades. Amazingly in a Shakespearean play there are no women, for the Mask of Ladies as Amazons is only a Mask, and Phrynia and Timandra are mere stage properties. There is very little spectacle, and a minimum of action. It is not a play therefore popular in appeal, or ever likely to be so. But against these negatives, what of the positive? The characters are subtilized Virtues and Vices, the staple of the play is satire and argument, and it is a play that could well appeal to a select thinking audience, for it covers much of the ground of Baconian essays on Friendship, Traffic, True and False Misanthropy, Law and Mercy, but, of course, with a most un-Baconian feeling. That is the kind of play it is, and the absence of women is not surprising. Apemantus asks: 'What things in the world canst thou nearest compare to thy flatterers?'; to which Timon replies: 'Women nearest; but men, men are the things themselves.' First things suffice, and there needs no women. Professor Dover Wilson writes of *Henry IV* that it 'is Shakes-

¹ Walter Raleigh, *Johnson on Shakespeare*, p. 208.

peare's great morality play'. Indeed it is, but *Timon* is his true morality play in the straight sense. It is the medieval morality play, only so much altered as to bring it very near to perfection.

There are two master keys to the play—the Three Strangers in III. ii, and the great scene (III. v) of Alcibiades before the senate. The first lets us into the secret of the nature of the play, its Morality nature: the second is the key to the play's very heart, the nature of its feeling; and, until that is fully apprehended, the argument of the play remains cold, intellectual, and obviously, from the many dissatisfied critics, a bad argument. Yet perhaps only the first key is really needed, for the First Stranger says all that need be said, and the scene before the Senate only drives home the lesson, though it also leads to the development of a further truth, the difference between Idealism (Timon) and Realism (Alcibiades) in their reactions to the world's treachery.

Scene ii of the Third Act is only a short scene, but what a power it carries. The crash of Timon is in the air: 'common rumours' tell how his 'happy hours are done and past, and his estate shrinks from him'. The servants of the usurers have been bidden to 'put on a most importunate aspect, a visage of demand', the senators have denied the pleas of Flavius, and the first 'friend', Lucullus, has denied Timon's servant. Now, in the hearing of the Three Strangers, Lucius too denies him help, pleading with an assumed bitterness of remorse, 'I have no power to be kind'. Almost abruptly the First Stranger assumes the role of a judge, or messenger of God, detached from all the action, to declare the truth about this world of Athens. 'Why, this is the world's soul', he declares:

Men must learn now with pity to dispense;
For policy sits above conscience.

The ingratitude of Lucius is not individual ingratitude; he and all his like in Athens share it, and in the only words of the Third Stranger, breaking in with a quiet and damning solemnity, 'Religion groans at it.' And there is nothing personal in the First Stranger's feeling: 'I never tasted Timon in my life.' Detached, he sees clearly, but he also feels: he knows Timon's quality—'right noble mind, illustrious virtue, and honourable carriage'; above all, 'so much I love his heart'. And we too must love Timon's heart so much if we are to understand Shakespeare's intentions. But why, then, does not the First Stranger help Timon? It is not that kind of play: the First Stranger and his colleagues have no individual dramatic function, for this is not a play of individuals. Look at the list of *dramatis personae* understandingly and the personal names almost vanish—it is only three flattering lords, one false friend, a selfish father, some senators, money-lenders and their servants, a faithful steward and some honest servants, a painter, a poet, a jeweller, a merchant, two mistresses, a page, a fool, two

banditti; there are left only Timon, Alcibiades, and Apemantus. Look a little longer, and these three, too, to a large extent lose their individual qualities. Apemantus is a fairly simple 'humour' of Railing Envy, Timon is Ideal Bounty and Friendship, Alcibiades alone is a man, a soldier, practical, sensual, yet a true friend, but still barely individualized. But, if we had not realized already the morality nature of this play, we should not for a moment doubt it after the incursion of the Three Strangers: they are symbolical, they sum it up beyond a doubt, as they lift the whole matter to a universal moral level.

It is idle to seek in Timon for the individual characterisation of normal drama and the background that goes with it. You might as well analyse the character of Patient Griselda as though she were a real woman. In so far as he is a citizen of Athens and a great one, he has a present and a past: he is not Man in the World, but certain ideals in a certain kind of society. Shakespeare has made a compromise; he has essayed the morality play, but in order to show Timon, who is in one aspect Bounty, in his other Ideal Friendship, not universally, but in a degenerate state, a 'coward and lascivious town', whose rulers worship money and security. It is a compromise typical of Shakespeare, who cannot give all up to the abstract, any more than he can in any of his plays let the romantic oust the real, dukes, fairies, and lovers squeeze out the mechanicals. He has a problem in his mind beyond such abstract entities as Noble Bounty and Ideal Friendship, the problem, namely, wherein lies the health of a society, what is the relation between law and justice, what the right relationship between the individual and the state. He cannot attack the state without putting Timon in a particular society, however abstractly rendered; but the actuality of past and present so involved is rudimentary, and should lead no one into asking for individual psychology.

Timon is the ideal set in an actual society, and so is introduced as Bounty. 'See, magic of bounty!' says the Poet (i. i. 5). 'Tis pity bounty had not eyes behind', says Flavius (i. ii. 166). 'O, he's the very soul of bounty', says the Third Lord (i. ii. 216). Such Ideal Bounty should have infinity of riches to draw on, for it is Noble Bounty—there is no doubt of that.

No villanous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.

Timon is no mere extravagant fool: the whole tenor of the play denies it. The flatterers, lords or merchants or fawning artists, have their use for him, but they do not suggest that he is a weak, extravagant fool: it is only in the spirit of the cold-blooded usurious senators of Athens to speak as Dowden does of Timon's 'kindly self-indulgence' and 'easy generosity', as though that were all there is to be said. 'Every man has his fault, and

honesty is his' (III. i. 30). Viewed as a man, he is too open and frank, he judges others by his own level, he is the victim of flatterers. But, though Bounty may be led astray by Flattery, that is an abstract statement: we are given no hint of how Timon the man was psychologically affected by his flatterers, and we err if we seek any psychological interpretation of his refusal to heed Flavius. Even as Bounty may be the victim of Flattery, so Bounty may not heed the Faithful Steward: it is mere general truth. For Timon is not only no mere bountiful man, or mere Bounty, but Ideal Bounty, whose twin soul is Ideal Friendship, and you cannot bind such a figure to property and talents. No man could be such a fool as Timon in respect of his money (and yet have been such a great general and pillar of the state), if you once begin to consider Timon as a normal man in a normal non-morality play. In brief, what matters is why Timon is so completely insulated from reality.

'So much I love his heart', says the First Stranger. That is the key to the whole matter. When the Poet, forecasting Timon's tragedy, speaks of 'his good and gracious nature', he is speaking only plain truth. That nature is consumed with an ideal of friendship. Timon's first words in the play are: 'Imprison'd is he, say you?' And at once there follows:

I am not of that feather to shake off
My friend when he must need me.

and

'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after.

When the old Athenian would deny his daughter in marriage to Lucilius, it is enough for Timon that in his opinion Lucilius 'is honest'. He asks only if the pair love one another. That known, then

To build his fortune I will strain a little,
For 'tis a bond in men.

How noble and how moving in its dramatic irony is his speech on friendship (I. ii. 90-111). His 'good friends' 'belong to my heart'. 'What need we have any friends, if we should ne'er have need of 'em? . . . Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits.' The mere thought of the mutual comfort of true friends bring tears to his eyes. 'Methinks, I could deal kingdoms to my friends, and ne'er be weary.' Indeed, the First Act is largely a dispersed dramatic meditation on true friendship. Again and again come the words 'friend' and 'friendship', and constant, too, on Timon's lips also are the words 'heart' and 'love'. He rebukes Apemantus for having a 'humour' 'does not become a man', for his thought is ever on what does become a man, on the ideal essence of human relationships, feeling hearts bound in mutual bonds. This is what insulates him so completely from reality. When the

shock of disillusionment comes, it may be psychologically true that from the one extreme he could pass only to the other; but he is so exalted beyond Timon the man to Timon who is Ideal Friendship that it is better to say that in that world of abstraction only an opposite abstraction can be apt: and let us remember that exaggeration is the soul of moral teaching (as in the hill of Fortune in the Poet's vision and, no doubt, in the 'thousand moral paintings' the Painter could show). Yet, in his madness, it is worth noting that Timon only transcends what his servant Flaminus felt when Lucullus rejected his pleading. 'Let molten coin be thy damnation . . . O may diseases only work upon't' (III. 1. 55-57): these curses of Flaminus are the embryo of much of Timon's own more gigantic curses. He cannot believe that all others do not share his faith.

Canst thou the conscience lack,
To think I shall lack friends?

He has stepped right outside the society he lives in.

This society is not the normal world. But, though abstractly rendered, it is a world concrete enough: it is a very clearly seen society, corrupted by wealth and selfishness. This condition of society the play builds up steadily. We step into Timon's hall, and we hear at once of this

most incomparable man, breathed, as it were,
To an untirable and continue goodness.

In the foreground we have the Painter, Poet, Merchant, and Jeweller; behind, a 'great flood of visitors'. It is a smiling, self-complacent, obsequious world of most hopeful hangers-on. With Timon's entry we begin to see beneath the faces and the talk, and to realize that the human heart is dried to dust. To the old Athenian his daughter is an asset to be realized at the best price; he has 'bred her at [his] dearest cost', and he is a man 'that from [his] first [has] been inclined to thrift': let the lover be as honest as he may, honesty must be its own reward, and if the girl marry for mere love most bitterly will he 'dispossess her all'. From the Jeweller we hear 'the common tongue' of commercial valuing. Apemantus may be hateful in his snarling, but there is point in his reply to Timon's 'Why dost thou call them knaves?'—'Are they not Athenians?' 'Traffic's thy god', Apemantus tells the Merchant. It is true; as is his comment:

That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,
And all this courtesy.

Yet it needs not Apemantus to tell us what a false world it is, which all the time, not without just cause, is belauding Timon—'the noblest mind he carries that ever govern'd man'. Timon himself sees it (yet without really seeing it), when he has no use for hollow welcomes, because his heart is ever in his consuming love—'where there is true friendship, there needs'

no such ceremoniousness. We feel the increasing irony in the satiric exposure: all talk of the heart: 'your heart's in the field now', says Timon to Alcibiades; 'might we but have that happiness, my Lord, that you would once use our hearts', says the First Lord; 'you moved me much', says the Third Lord. All the language of feeling is there, none of the thing itself. For all his cankered self-love, Apemantus is a true chorus: 'Friendship's full of dregs.' It is a senator who gives the first push to Timon's tottering house, for the great men of this state are usurers: 'banish usury', declares Alcibiades, 'usury that makes the senate ugly', for it is a 'usuring senate' (III. v. 100f.). How complacent the senators are with their 'joint and corporate voice' as Flavius half-parodies them when they 'froze [him] into silence'; like the old Athenian father, they do not care how 'honourable' a man is, content to mutter that 'a noble nature may catch a wretch'. Timon's eyes open a little, but in his generosity of soul he would fain ascribe this meanness of the senators to old age; yet he cannot deny it is there—'their blood is caked, 'tis cold, it seldom flows'. But the disease goes further than the old: it is everywhere. Ventidius is young, has just inherited his fortune, not got it by long thrift or usury or merchandise. How one short phrase illuminates it, when Lucullus, thinking every man has his price and trying to bribe Flaminus, remarks scornfully as a mere truism: 'this is no time to lend, *especially upon bare friendship*, without security.' Not only Flaminus is revolted. The servant who calls upon Sempronius is of like feeling, as he reflects: 'The devil knew not what he did when he made man politic . . . how fairly this lord strives to appear foul . . . of such a nature is his politic love.' It is too much not only for Timon's servants; it sickens those of his creditors, so that Hortensius says: 'it is against my heart . . . ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.'

Such is this society, mean, cold, hollow, selfish: a world of usury, where the arts of poetry and painting are content to flatter, and where, apart from the strangers, only the servants and the faithful steward have any human-heartedness: 'smoke and lukewarm water is [their] perfection.' If any other stands aside, it is to be like Apemantus, a fish out of water, an introverted self-lover, with an ingrowing discontent, aping the plain-dealer. It might have been enough to show how the 'friends' of Timon denied his pleas, but Shakespeare has filled it in with care. Even as far as this, there is enough to support Hazlitt's comment: 'the moral sententiousness of this play equals that of Lord Bacon's *Treatise on the Wisdom of the Ancients*, and is indeed seasoned with greater variety.' The signs of an unfinished play are there, as notably in the incursion of the Fool, but they do not affect the steady development: it builds steadily up to the great scene of Alcibiades before the senate. Now we know what kind of a

city this Athens is. Before Timon throws his last 'feast', and is off, mad, to the desert, Shakespeare will teach his lesson beyond mistaking. Or does the scene 'tumble suddenly into the action with the bewildering inconsequence of an episode in a dream'?¹

At a first reading, perhaps, Alcibiades comes to his great stature abruptly. But is it so when the play is seen whole and steadily? After the rather tedious interchange between Timon and Apemantus, Alcibiades is announced with 'some twenty horse'. Arrived, he cries to Timon: 'I feed hungrily on your sight'; and at once they leave the stage. But we must remember the staging: surely Alcibiades has a presence, and his arrival has caused a stir, and the audience has expectations. In the banqueting room his words are few, but he stands apart, drawing one's eyes, for he alone is sincere: he would rather 'be at a breakfast of enemies' 'so they were bleeding new'. In the hall, as they return from hunting, he is Timon's special friend, 'my Alcibiades'; he says nothing; the two of them are off the stage again quickly, and we see him no more until he is before the senate. But on the stage, we have noted him, and so we can, if we will, in the study, a noble figure, isolated in his sincerity, apart from all these flatterers, not involved in the tale of Timon's ruin, for he is a soldier, and feasts and flattery are not his world.

Now this brief, packed, cogent dramatic argument opens, and with its first words we learn what issues from this usuring senate of cold hearts—pitiless fear that strikes ruthlessly at any offender against its security.

First Sen. My lord, you have my voice to it; the fault's
Bloody; 'tis necessary he should die:
Nothing emboldens sin so much as mercy.

Sec. Sen. Most true; the law shall bruise him.

From this moment every word tells: it is as telling as the short, packed sentences that speak the verdicts of the jurymen at the trial of Faithful in *Pilgrim's Progress*. Here is the theme of Browning's poem, 'It was roses, roses, all the way', set forth in full at perfect length. Barely one hundred and twenty lines suffice to show us how this society deals with common humanity. Ideal Friendship has been driven to fury and verges upon madness, because, losing its power to be bountiful, it has lost all. Now Alcibiades picks up the theme, his simple, soldierly words quick with irony:

It pleases time and fortune to lie heavy
Upon a friend of mine.

When he pleads that his soldier saw 'his reputation touch'd to death', he is told he is too paradoxical, 'striving to make an ugly deed look fair'. The argument of the First Senator is all of a kind with the reply of the

¹ Una Ellis-Fermor, *R.E.S.*, July 1942, p. 278.

senators to the pleas of Flavius: this was no true courage of a man to defend his honour—no, 'he's truly valiant than can wisely suffer', and indeed to risk life for honour is 'folly'. Alcibiades can hardly interject a word, as the Second Senator follows the First. But he breaks in, to 'speak like a captain', to argue that such a man as they would have, a man able to endure insult, is no soldier to defend them. Urgently he tries to get at their hearts: 'Who cannot condemn rashness in cold blood?' But from thin, tight lips comes the response: 'You breathe in vain.' Surely the soldier's services to the state at Lacedaemon and Byzantium 'were a sufficient briber for his life'? But the First Senator is either too stupid or too contemptuous to understand. 'What's that?' he asks. (And what had it availed Timon in his pleas that he had 'deserved this hearing' 'even to the state's best health'?) To the Second Senator it is enough that it is said 'his days are foul and his drink dangerous'. Not even the pledge of Alcibiades, knowing how their 'reverend ages love security', to pawn his victories and all his honours in their service will suffice. This soldier's violence has been like a dagger at their cold hearts, and the vehemence of Alcibiades only gives an edge to their grinding fears. 'We are for law: he dies: urge it no more.' When Alcibiades cries, 'My wounds ache at you', they are beyond themselves with rage. Unaccustomed human feeling battering at their hearts' doors begets their furious anger. The soldier shall die, and Alcibiades shall be banished. Nothing must break into the cold security of their money-getting: they are for law, for money is more than men, and law than mercy. Alcibiades, alone, may curse them, and resolve upon revenge, but his banishment makes little stir in this society—a matter of tattle among the jostling crowd pressing into Timon's last feast, a day's wonder that can keep: 'I'll tell you more anon. Here's a noble feast toward.'

So the play has come to its climax and turning point. First, Ideal Friendship, displaying Noble Bounty, has stated its case; gradually, with increasing scope and detail, the baseness of Athenian society has appeared; then, where all have talked of Friendship, and none but Timon has meant it, when the abstract Virtue is almost ready to be transformed to a similarly abstract Vice, a real man has pleaded for his friend, a fellow soldier. This is the true transformation of the old morality play: we start with the general, and come to the particular, remembering with Blake that 'General Forms have their vitality in Particulars; and every Particular is a Man'. And it is most proper that the scene before the senate should come before Timon's last feast. After that, Timon's madness will be monstrous. In his compromise Shakespeare has inevitably had to allow some humanity to Timon, and Timon will appear an incredible monster of a man. But already we have seen how the realization of the true nature of this society

affects an ordinary man: every word of Alcibiades before the senate has come from his very human heart, and upon him as a man, not a part-man, part-Virtue, like Timon, what is the effect? A cold, consuming hatred and spirit of revenge. Alcibiades declares himself 'worse than mad' to have been the dupe and tool of men like these.

The Fourth Act shares the usual characteristics of the Shakespearean fourth Act. It is an interval to be filled as effectively as possible before the dénouement of the last Act, and, apart from such details as the misplaced announcement that the Painter and the Poet are at hand, it is very effectively handled. It is a composite curse upon this society, whose basis is gold. Driven to the opposite pole, Timon would have all the world upturned in chaos. Modern critics over-emphasize the element of 'sex nausea'—it is only part of the confusion Timon invokes, and a most proper part. This is a play of personal human relationships, and the relationship of husband and wife, man and woman in terms of sex, looms as large as that of ruler and subject, master and servant, parent and child, and, if we keep out of our minds thoughts of the 'strain of sex nausea' in other Shakespearean plays, we should not find the sexual element to occupy more than its just proportion in Timon's curses. And among those curses stands out forcibly the curse upon this state's legalism, so taking us back to the scene before the senate:

Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,
And pill by law.

And all these curses are set against the fundamental source of Timon's shock:

Breath, infect breath,
That their society, as their friendship, may
Be merely poison.

This Fourth Act, to a quite remarkable degree, goes over all the ground of the first three Acts. Note after note is struck in echo of their contents. Take the short second Scene of fifty lines. We are reminded of all the essentials: of the morality nature of the play in 'For bounty, that makes gods, does still mar men'; of Timon's nobleness—'so noble a master fall'n', 'poor honest lord, brought low by his own heart, undone by goodness'; of the theme of friendship—'All gone! and not one friend to . . . go along with him!'; of the appeal to the heart—'Yet do our hearts wear Timon's livery'; of the faithfulness of the servants and of Flavius, they at least in this usuring state banding together in true fellowship, and Flavius even trying to replace Timon's bounty with his promise, 'the latest of my wealth I'll share amongst you'. Nor is this repetition of the earlier Acts tedious, but it comes freshly with the changed emphasis of pathos or

irony, and one could continue to trace it through this Act. We see deeper below the surface of this hollow world down to its basic insincerity: .

all is oblique;
There's nothing level in our cursed natures
But direct villany . . .

which henceforth Timon will prefer. 'Religion groans at it', the Third Stranger had said: now Timon remarks on how gold 'will knit and break religions'. We have seen the legal cruelty of the senate: now Timon remarks that 'religious canons, civil laws are cruel'. 'Crack the lawyer's voice', cries Timon. To Timon by the seashore, first Alcibiades enters: him we will leave for a moment. Then comes Apemantus, and we are treated to an essay in dialogue to show the difference between envy and hurt idealistic love, an essay full of matter—and still the recurrent emphasis on hearts: 'O thou touch of hearts', Timon apostrophises the gold. Then come the rascal thieves, and Timon's summary of thievery, containing again the criticism of the law: 'each thing's a thief: the laws . . . in their rough power have uncheck'd theft.' Then enters Flavius to show that Timon cannot deny all honesty, that not even the abstract can swing to a complete opposite:

How fain would I have hated all mankind!
And thou redeem'st thyself.

With the opening of Act V the Painter and the Poet are back to show the power of gold over the arts too, and, finally, to bring all full circle, the senators themselves are there to plead for Timon's help in the hour of their need. In all this sequence there has been little lagging, far less than is common in a fourth Act, very much less than occurs even in the concentration of *Macbeth*. There has been no excitement of action, but this lack has been compensated for by a cogency and drive of ideas, producing almost an intellectual excitement, and giving a pleasure comparable to that of the rising cogency of the arguing in Dryden's *Medal*. It reminds us again of Hazlitt's comment already quoted: 'It is one of the few [plays] in which he seems to be in earnest throughout, never to trifle nor go out of his way.'

But what of Alcibiades, whom we have omitted? How strange that some critics can actually omit him altogether, for, as he re-enters the play, greeting Timon in the desert, it is to resume the theme of friendship and to make ready for the play's ending, not by mere plot or action to bring down the curtain, but in a final lesson to restore sanity and human decency. 'Noble Timon', he says, when he has recognized this uncouth Misanthropos, 'what friendship may I do thee?' (We cannot get away from the word 'friend' in this play.) 'I am thy friend and pity thee, dear Timon.' Timon's attitude cannot divorce him from the heart of Alcibiades: 'If I

thrive well, I'll visit thee again'—and it will not be for more gold. And to reinforce the parallel to his own case and that of his soldier, the words of Alcibiades remind us, too, that Timon had had great claims on Athens—his 'worth . . . great deeds, when neighbour states, but for thy name and fortune, trod upon them'. The reminder prepares us to see the senators appear to entreat Timon as their only hope, offering him absolute power, if he will defend them against Alcibiades. And as the senators approach, we learn from their own lips the irresponsible, insulated spirit that has been living in their counting-houses, ignorant of all humanity outside. For they think it so easy a project to woo Timon to their ends: not knowing themselves what it is to suffer in the heart, they think they have only to offer him 'the fortunes of his former days' and straightway he will be his former self again. It is time the irresponsibility of commercial-hearted Athens was taught its lesson.

The play ends with an admirable brevity. Following upon the anxiety of the senators before the walls of Athens, as they await Timon's answer, the soldier's words when he comes upon Timon's tomb are, no doubt, journey-work, but when Alcibiades appears there is nothing too much, nothing amiss. The curt rebuke of 'this coward and lascivious town' and of the senators who have made 'their wills the scope of justice', and the restrained pleas of the senators that time has passed and all now living are not involved in the offences, are followed by the demand of Alcibiades that only those who have offended shall be purged:

Those enemies of Timon's, and mine own,
Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof,
Fall, and no more.

"Tis most nobly spoken.' There remains only the last praise of 'noble Timon', and Alcibiades 'will use the olive with [his] sword'. Sanity, with common decency, is restored: there shall be human-heartedness again. And Alcibiades has achieved it, the common sensual man, whose ideals are tempered with weakness. He, like Henry v, is the better ruler. The disillusioned idealist is broken and mad, but Alcibiades can cleanse and then forgive. Alcibiades can succeed because he is more in harmony with the 'perpetual-sober gods' (iv. iii. 500), whom 'the general and exceptless rashness' of Timon offends. It is a view consonant with Shakespeare elsewhere.

So let us leave Timon is his

everlasting mansion

Upon the beached verge of the salt flood,

the tears of ocean in his ears, while Athens resumes her life, emerging from her fears and the meanness of her soul purged partly by those fears. Shakespeare has given us an unusual play, perhaps a unique play, but

surely not so unique that it cannot be seen, especially now, as Hazlitt saw it, a piece of peculiarly cogent thinking. When we think of how Shakespeare has exalted his Ideal Friendship and Bounty, let us not see mere stupid extravagance in *Timon*, but rather feel with Yeats that 'only the wasteful virtues earn the sun'. Let us remember with Wordsworth the lesson:

Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely calculated less and more.

This is one of the plays of Shakespeare that Francis Bacon could not have even begun to write.

ROCHESTER'S 'A SESSION OF THE POETS'

By J. HAROLD WILSON

In a series of studies some years ago,¹ Mr. R. G. Ham built up an ingenious case for Elkanah Settle as the author of the satire variously titled 'A Session of the Poets' and 'A Trial of the Poets for the Bays', usually ascribed to Rochester. While Mr. Ham's arguments have not been generally accepted, neither have they been answered.²

Mr. Ham bases the case for Settle chiefly on the following:

1. He connects the satire with letters between Savile and Rochester in November, 1677, in one of which Savile described the turmoil caused by a recent satire on the poets; in reply, Rochester expressed interest and asked for a copy of the poem. If these letters refer to 'A Session of the Poets', Rochester's authorship is truly doubtful.

2. Mr. Ham makes much of what he calls the mildness of the attack on Settle in the 'Session', which might indicate that Settle put himself into the satire in order to avoid suspicion of being the author.

3. The poem is ascribed to Settle by Otway in his *The Poet's Complaint of His Muse*, 1680.

4. An anonymous play, *Wits Led by the Nose*, (August-September, 1677) contains clear references to Settle, connecting him with the 'Session' and possibly with a duel which he might have fought with Otway. This duel is referred to cryptically by Shadwell in *The Tory Poets*, 1682.

5. An anonymous pamphlet, *A Character of a True Blue Protestant Poet*, 1682, represents Settle as having been challenged by Otway on the presumption that the former had written the 'Session'. To avoid the duel, Settle is supposed to have written a grovelling confession and apology. This pamphlet was attacked by Settle in *A Supplement to the Narrative*, 1683, in which he vehemently denied the whole story, as well as the authorship of the 'Session'. Mr. Ham refused to consider this denial seriously.

So brief a summary cannot do justice to Mr. Ham's carefully detailed

¹ 'Otway's Duels with Churchill and Settle', *M.L.N.*, xli, January 1925, p. 73; 'Dryden Versus Settle', *Mod. Phil.*, xxv, May 1928, p. 409; *Otway and Lee*, 1931, pp. 108-12; 'The Authorship of "A Session of the Poets (1677)"', *R.E.S.*, ix, July 1933, p. 319.

² Graham Greene ('Otway and Mrs. Barry', *T.L.S.*, 16 April, 1931, p. 307) claimed the satire for Buckingham. The reply to his letter by 'Reviewer' implied acceptance of the Settle theory. D. M. Walmsley ('A Trial of the Poets', *T.L.S.*, 28 May, 1931, p. 427) denied Settle's authorship and intimated that he accepted Rochester as the author. Hugh Macdonald (*A Journal from Parnassus*, 1937, p. ix) noted: 'Mr. Ham has argued, though without carrying conviction, that it ["A Session"] was by Settle.' He repeated this opinion in his *John Dryden, A Bibliography*, 1939, p. 221, n. 3.

arguments, but it does, I hope, give the gist of his case. With his various items of evidence there can be some disagreement, and perhaps I may be permitted to draw rather different conclusions.

Apparently, around 1677-80 Settle was suspected of being the author of the 'Session'. At least Otway must have thought so when he wrote of Settle as

that blundering Sot

Who a late Session of the Poets wrote.

However, we must remember that Settle and Otway were then engaged in vicious political writing, the first for the Whigs, the second for the Tories, and each snatched at any weapon with which to injure his opponents. The anonymous author of *The True Blue Protestant Poet* (also a Tory, and bent on defaming Settle) took up the 'Session' attribution and added to it the story of a challenge and the subsequent letter of apology from Settle to Otway. This yarn, according to Settle in his reply, was sheer malicious invention.¹

Now if, with Mr. Ham, we accept the story told in *The True Blue Protestant Poet*, how can we reconcile it with the fact of Settle's denial? Presumably, at one time he had confessed his guilt in order to avoid a duel; later he denied everything, recanting his supposed confession. Yet Otway was still alive, and still wore a sword. We have therefore an accusation by Otway, elaborated upon by an anonymous party hack. Against these we have Settle's circumstantial and angry denial of everything. Lacking other evidence the historian may accept either side as correct, but surely the weight of existing evidence, especially considering the quality of Restoration political pamphleteering, must incline us to accept Settle's denial.²

¹ The significant part of his reply was reprinted by Montague Summers (*Works of Otway*, 1926, p. lxxi): '... I was accused of being the author of a scandalous copy of verses call'd the Sessions of the Poets, an illnated scurrilous lampoon, written some years since, and now laid as believed at the fathers door, being printed amongst the Lord Rs— poems. Among the other extravagancies in that base and malicious libel against me, it was said that I gave it under my hand to Mr. O— a gentleman highly wronged and affronted in that paper of verses, that I was the author of that Session of Poets, and that for which I was the son of a whore.

'Which is so damnable a falshood, and so publickly known to be so too, that on the quite contrary I disown'd and abjured the writing so much as one syllable of it; and to vindicate my self from the scandal of such a lampoon, at that time so unjustly and so universally laid at my door, and so much to my disreputation, if to clear my self by no less a protestation then that I was the son of a whore if I wrote one word of it, when indeed I did not write one word of it, be calling a mothers honesty into question, let the world judge.'

² I believe that Mr. Ham had misconstrued Shadwell's allusion to the Settle-Otway affair in *The Tory Poets*. Bayes (Dryden) is supposed to be saying,

But though I have no Plot, and Verse be rough
I say 'tis Wit, and that sure is enough.
The Lawrell makes a Wit; a Brave, the Sword;
And all are wise men at a Council board;
S—le's a Coward, 'cause fool Ot—y fought him,
And Mul—ve is a Wit because I taught him.

We come now to the question of date. Let us return to Savile's letter to Rochester on November 1, 1677. He wrote:

and now I am upon poetry I must tell you the whole tribe are alarumed at a libell against them lately sent by the post to Will's coffe house. I am not happy enough to have seen it, but I heare it commended and therefore the more probably thought to be composed att Woodstock, especially considering what an assembly either is yett or att least has been there, to whom my most humble service, if they are yett with you.¹

Now the fact that Saville immediately suspected the 'libell' of emanating from Woodstock (since 1674, Rochester's residence as Ranger of Woodstock Park) leads to the conclusion that such satires had been written there in the past, when the jolly Wits were together in their masculine retreat. Furthermore, the fact that the poem was 'sent by the post' indicates a very recent composition; yet the evidence in the poem itself is all for composition nearly a year earlier.

I am convinced that the 'Session' was written, not in the autumn of 1677, but in November or December of 1676 (and probably at Woodstock).² The plays referred to in the satire are Ravenscroft's *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* (July, 1672) which was re-issued as *Mammamouchi* (4to, 1675); Settle's *Ibrahim* (March, 1676) but not his *Pastor Fido* (December, 1676); Otway's *Don Carlos* (Easter, 1676), but not his *Titus and Berenice* with the popular *Cheats of Scapin* (January, 1676/7); Rawlins's *Tom Essence* (September, 1676); and D'Urfey's *Madam Fickle* (4 November, 1676), but not his *The Fool Turn'd Critick* (18 November, 1676). Furthermore, Lee is described as having 'hit once in thrice', i.e. in May, 1674, April, 1675 and January, 1675/6. His fourth play and greatest success was *The Rival Queens* (January, 1676/7), which could hardly have escaped a satirist's attention. All other references in the 'Session' are to events or situations antedating December, 1676.³

Obviously, if the 'Session' was written not later than December, 1676, it can hardly have been the 'libell' sent by the post to Will's coffee-house in late October, 1677. Indeed, by that time the 'Session' should have been

The intention is obviously ironic; i.e., Mulgrave is no Wit, Settle is no Coward, the laurel does not make a wit, etc. I suspect that Shadwell was alluding to a current piece of gossip, perhaps to the story told in *The True Blue Protestant Poet*, and implying that there was nothing in it.

¹ *The Rochester-Savile Letters*, ed., J. H. Wilson, 1941, p. 49. The 'assembly' comprised the Earl of Rochester, the Duke of Buckingham, probably the Earl of Dorset and Fleetwood Shepherd, and perhaps others of the Court Wits.

² Hugh Macdonald (*John Dryden, A Bibliography*, p. 220) refers to two manuscript collections, in one of which the 'Session' is dated 1676, and in the other 1676-77.

³ The quip at Etherege's 'Seven years silence', would seem to put the date of the 'Session' back to 1675, since *She wou'd if she cou'd* was produced in February, 1667/8, and *The Man of Mode* appeared on 11 March, 1675/6. However, the poem was clearly written after the production of the second of the two plays, and the error could easily be accounted for by faulty memory, bad arithmetic, or confusion caused by the complications of Old and New Style in dating.

well known. That it was, is indicated by the references to it in the anonymous *Wits Led by the Nose* (1677); see, for example, a passage which Mr. Ham quotes, and which mirrors the satire on Settle in the 'Session'. One quarreling poetaster is made to say to another :

Villian, you have abus'd Poetry it self, and I will be reveng'd, I will have a Session of Poets shall damn thee Ibraimattically, lead thee to School by the Nose and chastise thy Innocence.¹

Evidently, the anonymous author of the play expected his audience to see the point of his jest. His play was produced in August or September, 1677; surely the 'Session' could not have 'alarumed' the tribe of poets two months later!

We may reason then, that the Savile-Rochester letters of November, 1677, do not refer to the 'Session' (which must have been well known by that time), but to another satire, since lost or unidentified; that the 'Session' was written not later than December, 1676 (possibly at Woodstock); and that Mr. Ham's major objection to Rochester as the author of the satire is removed.

'A Session of the Poets', which has never been adequately edited, was evidently occasioned by a kind of *poetomachia* which had been waging for some three years.² Dryden, annoyed by Settle's careless slurs in the preface to *The Empress of Morocco* (4to, 1673), had joined with Shadwell and Crowne in an abusive pamphlet entitled *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco* (1674). In a parody in the preface to that essay, Dryden addressed Settle as 'Great Boy', a title echoed in the 'Session', 'And bid the great Boy should be sent back to School'.

Settle replied to the confederates in *Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco Revised* (1674). Dryden and Crowne dropped out of the fight, but Shadwell carried on with a burlesque picture of Settle as a foolish heroic poet in his adaptation of Newcastle's *The Triumphant Widow* (November, 1674). Settle hit back in his brief postscript to *Love and Revenge* (4to, 1675), and drew in exchange some sarcastic remarks in the preface to Shadwell's *The Libertine* (4to, 1676). The last word seems to have been Settle's lengthy review of the quarrel in his preface to *Ibrahim* (4to, 1677, but actually published in 1676).³ It was in this preface that

¹ Quoted by R. G. Ham, 'The Authorship of "A Session of the Poets" (1677)', *R.E.S.*, ix, p. 321. I suspect that the two poetasters are burlesques of Shadwell and Settle, rather than Otway and Settle, as Mr. Ham claims. The quarrel between the first two was well known in London.

² The story of this quarrel has been related by numerous editors. For Settle's side of the matter, see Frank C. Brown, *Elkanah Settle: His Life and Works*, 1910.

³ *Ibrahim* was licensed for the press on 4 May, 1676, entered in the *Stationers' Register*, 7 July, 1676, and advertised in the *Term Catalogues* by W. Cademan (together with D'Urfey's *The Siege of Memphis*, 1676) on 22 November, 1676. The date 1677 on the title page is either an error or an example of pre-dating, which apparently was not an uncommon practice. (See W. W. Greg, 'Notes on Old Books', *The Library*, 4th Series,

Settle wrote bitterly of Shadwell,

Yet I have a little more reason than my Fellow sufferers to complain: For he makes it his business before he sees a Line of any of my Plays, to cry 'em down; and long before they are Acted to make Factions and Cabals to damn them: and in all Companies, he cries *God damme I* [i.e. Settle] *can't write Sense nor Grammar*.

This is echoed in the 'Session' by the line 'G—d D—me, cries Shadwell, he cannot write Sense'.

Otway, too, seems to have been infected by the spirit of contention; witness his gibe at Dryden in the preface to *Don Carlos*.¹ Yet in the 'Session' he is called 'Tom Shadwell's dear Zany', so that we can hardly picture him as siding with Settle in the controversy. It is possible that all five of the leading poets of the decade were at odds with each other.

The opening lines of the 'Session' describe the 'factious and clam'rous Crowd' of poets, and give as Apollo's reason for calling the meeting the necessity for establishing order, 'a Government, Leader, and Laws'. One by one the poets are brought before Apollo, gibed at and dismissed. Dryden, accused of 'quitting the Muses to wear a black gown',² is given leave to turn priest. Etherege is considered too lazy to be laureate. Wycherley is debarred as a gentleman, because 'a Trader in Wit the Lawrell should wear'. Shadwell, 'a jovial wit', is told to keep on drinking. Lee, in spite of some jests at his bibulous habits, is made Apollo's 'Ovid at Augustus's Court'. Settle, humbly offering his *Ibrahim* minus the offending preface, is handsomely insulted. Otway, bragging of his skill at 'Heroicks',³

vii, 218.) Copies of *Ibrahim* with 'The Preface to the Reader' are extremely rare. To judge by the bibliographical evidence, the preface was inserted after the book had gone to press, and it was evidently withdrawn when only a few copies had been printed and sewn. The occasion for the preface may have been the printing of Shadwell's *The Virtuoso* (summer, 1676) with its arrogant preface to which Settle alludes. The reason for the suppression of the preface can only be conjectured. Settle referred sarcastically to a burlesque on him in *The Triumphant Widow* (which had been given to Shadwell 'to bring into the Duke's Play-house') apparently without knowing that the Duke of Newcastle was the author of the original play. (See *A Pleasant & Merrye Humor off a Roge*, ed., Francis Needham, Welbeck Miscellany No. 1, 1933.) Settle and Shadwell were rivals for Newcastle's patronage; later in the preface Settle complains that Shadwell had tried to ruin him in the esteem of a certain 'Honourable Family'—i.e. the Newcastle family. (*Ibrahim* was dedicated to Elizabeth, Duchess of Albemarle, Newcastle's granddaughter.) We may conjecture that after the first copies of *Ibrahim* had come off the press (c. November, 1676), Settle discovered that the Newcastle family was not pleased with his preface; accordingly he withdrew it from all remaining copies. This must all have happened before 25 December, 1676, when the Duke of Newcastle died.

¹ He represents Dryden as saying that he knew not a line in *Don Carlos* which he would be author of. In reply Otway wrote: 'I know a comedy of his, that has not so much as a quibble in it which I would be author of.'

² For a summary of the rather tenuous evidence that in 1676 Dryden was seeking a post at Oxford (which would necessitate his taking orders) see E. S. De Beer, 'Dryden's Anti-Clericalism', *N. & Q.*, clxxix (1940), 254-7. Mr. De Beer uses the above line from the 'Session' as a part of his argument, dating that satire in the first three months of 1677.

³ See his preface to *Don Carlos* (1676): 'I dare not presume to take to my self what a great many, and those (I am sure) of good judgement too, have been so kind to afford me, (*viz.*) That it is the best Heroick Play that has been written of late.'

is sent away as the 'Scum of a Play-house'. Crowne is told that he lacks 'Sense of Smart' and is 'past Sense of Shame'. Behn has faded with the years. The claims of D'Urfey, Rawlins, and Ravenscroft are ignored. Finally, Tom Betterton is made laureate, because 'he had writ Plays, yet ne'er came in Print'.¹

If anyone is mildly treated in the satire it is Dryden, who is not attacked as a poet or a personality. As for Mr. Ham's contention that Settle is favoured, note the full passage:

Poet Settle his Tryal was the next came about,
He brought him an *Ibrahim* with the Preface torn out,
And humbly desir'd he might give no Offence;
G—d D—me, cries Shadwel, he cannot write Sense;
And *B—ll—cks*, cry'd *Newport*, I hate that dull rogue.
Apollo considering he was not in Vogue,
Would not trust his dear Bays with so modest a Fool,
And bid the great Boy should be sent back to School.²

I do not see how this series of cruel remarks, raking up old slurs, can be considered mild treatment, nor is it conceivable that Settle would have written such things about himself. Moreover, had he been the author of the 'Session', he would surely have castigated his bitter enemy Shadwell with the utmost severity. Yet note the genial, good-humoured (although Rabelaisian) tone of the passage on Shadwell:

Next into the Crowd Tom Shadwel does wallow,
And swears by his Guts, his Paunch, and his Tallow,
'Tis he that alone best pleases the Age;
Himself and his Wife have supported the Stage.
Apollo well pleas'd with so bonny a Lad,
T'oblige him, he told him he should be huge glad,
Had he half so much Wit as he fancy'd he had.
However, to please so jovial a Wit,
And to keep him in Humour, Apollo thought fit
To bid him drink on, and keep his old Trick
Of railing at Poets, and shewing his —

I contend that the writer of the 'Session' was no professional dramatist, but a gentleman and a courtier. Etherege and Wycherley, gentlemen both, and intimates of the Court circle of Buckingham, Rochester, Dorset and Sedley, are not attacked, but praised; it is the professional poets who are vilified. The tone of the satire is one of sarcastic superiority, just what one

¹ One of Mr. Ham's subsidiary arguments against the authorship of Rochester is that the 'Session' 'deals entirely with the professional element of the poetical world, and not, as in the case of the *Allusion* . . . with at least a fair proportion of the noble pretenders to wit'. (See 'The Authorship of "The Session of the Poets"', p. 320). I am not sure whom Mr. Ham would include among his noble pretenders, but certainly Etherege and Wycherley were gentlemen, amateurs, courtiers, and members of the circle of Court Wits.

² The text is from Dryden's *Miscellany*, 1716, II, 97. I have restored the original and obviously correct 'B—ll—cks' (found in all manuscript versions and in the 1680 edition of Rochester's poems) instead of the meaningless reference to 'Banks', a minor playwright.

might expect from a nobleman who might deign to patronize dramatists as poets, but who considered them contemptible as men. It is just the tone of Rochester's reply to Savile's letter of 1 November, 1677 (certainly about some other satire):

For the Libel you speak of, upon that most unwitty Generation the present Poets, I rejoice in it with all my Heart, and shall take it for a Favour, if you will send me a Copy. He cannot want Wit utterly, that has a Spleen to those Rogues, tho' never so dully express'd.¹

This, of course, is no proof that Rochester wrote the 'Session'. However, it must be remembered that he had patronized at one time or another Dryden, Crowne, Settle, Otway, Lee, and perhaps Shadwell; in return, the first five had all dedicated plays to him. As fast as a protégé grew vainglorious, Rochester smote him with satire, for 'he was a continual Curb to Impertinence, and the publick Censor of Folly'.² In 'Timon, a Satyr' (c. 1673), he had derided Shadwell, Settle, Crowne and Dryden. In his epilogue to Sir Francis Fane's *Love in the Dark* (1675), he had devoted much heavy sarcasm to Shadwell's *Psyche* (February, 1674/5). In *An Allusion to Horace* (c. Spring, 1676), he had castigated Crowne, Settle, Otway, and Lee, given grudging praise to 'hasty Shadwell', and scolded Dryden for bare-faced bawdry and critical arrogance. Certainly the 'Session' is consistent with Rochester's expressed attitudes toward the poets of the day.³

Little evidence for authorship can be drawn from contemporary attributions. The satire is anonymous in every manuscript version that has come to my knowledge,⁴ and it is anonymous in Dryden's *Miscellany*, where it did not appear until 1716. It is attributed to Rochester in two early editions of his works, in 1680 and in 1685. Settle, in placing the lampoon at Rochester's door in 1683, was writing, of course, after its appearance in print under Rochester's name, and yet Settle qualified his attribution with an 'as believed'. Later, Crowne, in his preface to *Caligula* (1697), referred to the 'Session' as Rochester's without question, but we cannot assume that he had any special knowledge. In the *Miscellaneous Works of . . . Buckingham*, 1704, the poem is attributed to that noble author.

It is quite possible that the satire was the joint product of a group of the Court Wits, meeting perhaps at Rochester's country retreat, Woodstock.⁵

¹ *Rochester-Savile Letters*, p. 50.

² Robert Wolsley, Preface to Rochester's *Valentinian*, 1685.

³ It is, of course, impossible to refute Mr. Ham's claim that the 'Session' is not Rochester's because it 'bears not the slightest resemblance to his indubitable work' ('Dryden versus Settle', p. 411), since such a contention is matter of opinion only. Of course, Rochester had no consistent style. He wrote in a wide variety of metres and forms, and his wit was now sharp, now heavy. The 'Session' is a deliberate imitation of Suckling's famous satire, and the same rough, tumbling metre is obviously appropriate. It is the metre and style, by the way, in which Rochester wrote his 'Signior Dildo' in 1673.

⁴ See Macdonald, *John Dryden, A Bibliography*, p. 220, and the 1680 manuscript volume, 'A Collection of Poems', in the Harvard Library, (Eng. 636 F.).

⁵ Johannes Prinz published in his *John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (p. 267) an undated

In support of this hypothesis we have Savile's letter of 1677, with its clear-cut implication that such satires had been written at Woodstock, as the resultant of the 'Assembly' that regularly gathered there. Furthermore, there is one line in the poem that is difficult to explain except on such a hypothesis: 'B-II-cks, cried *Newport*, I hate that dull rogue.'

Now who is *Newport*, and why should he be quoted?¹ All other names in the satire are those of dramatists. There is, of course, the dubious possibility that this is a mistake for *Newcastle*, the ducal playwright who was *Shadwell's* patron. However, 'Newport' is repeated consistently in all manuscript and printed versions that I have seen. The reference must be to Francis ('Frank') *Newport*, who, like *Rochester*, was a very profane wit.

Frank *Newport* was the second son of Francis, Lord *Newport*, who was Treasurer of the Household to Charles II. Frank was a minor courtier; in 1664 he accompanied Sir Richard *Fanshawe* on his embassy to Spain. Among his associates on that journey was young William *Wycherley*.² On 30 May, 1668, *Pepys* met him in company with Harry *Killigrew*, 'as very rogues as any in the town',³ and members of the obscene company of 'Ballers', to which *Savile*, *Sedley*, *Rochester*, and others of the Court Wits also belonged.⁴ Frank was evidently given to scandalous behaviour; on 19 February, 1677, it was reported that he had got drunk, misbehaved himself, and been confined for a few days.⁵ Some years later he was mentioned in 'The Lovers' Session' as on a par with *Jevon* and *Haines* (two well known comics) for 'low buffooning'.⁶ According to *Luttrell*, he died on 24 November, 1692.

Here, then, is the very type of character to have been present at a ribald gathering of the Wits, and to have interjected into a literary session an obscene comment which so tickled the muses' secretary (probably *Rochester* himself) that he wrote it in with full credit to the speaker.

Finally, while there can be no positive proof that *Rochester* was the author of 'A Session of the Poets', it seems to me that all available evidence points clearly toward him as at least the major hand in its composition, and just as clearly away from *Elkanah Settle*. Until further evidence appears (or better arguments) I suggest that the poem be allowed to rest quietly in the *Rochester* canon.

letter (1676?) from *Rochester* at Woodstock to his wife at Adderbury. He wrote in part: 'I fear I must see London shortly, & begin to repent I did not bring you wth mee for since these rakehells are nott here to disturb us you myght have past yr devotions this Holy season [Christmas] as well in this place as att Adderbury.'

¹ *Prinz* (*Rochester*, p. 73) makes the remarkable suggestion that this is Maurice *Ewens*, Jesuit priest (1611-1687), who assumed the name Maurice *Newport* when he entered the Society of Jesus in 1635. It is impossible to reconcile the aged rector of the London district with the obscene expression quoted above.

² *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, pp. 151, 172, 195.

³ *Pepys* called him 'young' *Newport*, probably to distinguish him from his older (and soberer) brother, Richard (1645-1723).

⁴ Cf. *Rochester-Savile Letters*, p. 31.

⁵ John Verney, *H.M.C.*, Report 7, p. 468. ⁶ *Poems on Affairs of State*, 1716, II, 159.

PERCY'S *HAU KIOU CHOAAN*

By T. C. FAN

A series of articles by Miss Milner-Barry, Dr. L. F. Powell, and Mr. V. H. Ogburn in the *Review of English Studies*¹ has thrown light on the obscure character of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the first Chinese novel that was translated into a European language. Much of what has been done, however, may be called 'external', in the sense that it deals with the external history of the work. Additional information can be gathered from a careful reading of the novel with reference to its Chinese original. And the reading is not at all unpleasant, for the English version, in spite of its imperfections as a translation, does retain some traces of the naïve charm of Oriental fiction.

The manuscript on which Percy worked has never been discovered, and our knowledge of it is derived largely from the Preface to his edition. According to Percy, it was contained in 'four thin folio books or volumes of Chinese paper', of which the first three were in English and the fourth in Portuguese. His information is incomplete: he does not even give the name of the 'gentleman', of the East India Company, among whose papers the manuscript was found. Immediately upon the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in 1761, doubt was cast upon its authenticity. Naturally, Percy was disturbed. He seems to have made inquiries about the novel in China through the East India Company. At the end of the second edition of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1767) he inserted an 'Extract of a Letter from Canton', showing that the novel *did* exist in China and that people at Canton knew it. But immediately this letter was pronounced a forgery. Then, in 1774, in the Advertisement to a re-issue of *Hau Kiou Choaan* which was never published, he gives more information about the owner of the manuscript—'Mr. James Wilkinson, an English merchant, equally respected for his ability and his probity.'² Even as late as 1805, over forty years after the publication of the work, the question of the authenticity of the manuscript remained. On 13 August

¹ Alda Milner-Barry, 'A Note on the Early Literary Relations of Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Percy', *R.E.S.*, II, 51-61; L. F. Powell, 'Hau Kiou Choaan', *R.E.S.*, II, 446-55; Alda Milner-Barry and L. F. Powell, 'A Further Note on Hau Kiou Choaan', *R.E.S.*, III, 214-18; V. H. Ogburn, 'The Wilkinson MSS. and Percy's Chinese Books', *R.E.S.*, IX, 30-36.

² Dr. Powell has collected the essential documents on the controversy over the MS.; see *R.E.S.*, II, 446-55. Mr. Ogburn has given additional data from the Percy Papers in the Harvard Library; see *R.E.S.*, IX, 31-34.

1805 Edmond Malone inquired about it in his letter to Percy: Malone had heard some imperfect account of the work; but 'nothing *distinctively*'. To this letter Percy replied on 28 September 1805, repeating in the main what he had already said in the Preface to his edition and in the Advertisement to its re-issue in 1774.¹ He did not, as he could not, produce definite proof of its authenticity. We do not know whether or not Malone was satisfied with his statement, which is by no means quite distinctive. In fact, even today, when much has been done in the nature of an *exposé* of the mystification, people may still incline to think that Percy's *Hau Kiou Chooan* is not altogether Chinese.

The root of the matter is, of course, that sinology had not begun in England when the controversy over *Hau Kiou Chooan* was started. For more than a century translations of Chinese books had already been available, but they were made by missionaries, especially Jesuits, rather than merchants or traders. It was Intorcetta and Noël who translated *The Four Books*,² from which Europeans derived some of the moral and political ideas of Confucius. It was Joseph de Prémare, a French Jesuit, who translated the first Chinese tragedy, *The Little Orphan of the House of Chao*, which gave rise to several adaptations: William Hatchett's *The Chinese Orphan* (1741), Metastasio's *Eroe Cinese* (1752), Voltaire's *L'Orphelin de la Chine* (1753), and Arthur Murphy's *The Orphan of China* (1759). It was D'Entrecolles, another French Jesuit, who translated some portions of the popular Chinese anthology *Chin Ku Chi' Kwan* (c. 1650); and one of the tales, the Ephesian matron *à la chinoise*, through the adaptations of Voltaire and Goldsmith, acquired a wide currency in Europe.³ It seems that none of the English merchants in the East India Company, some of whom had produced accounts of their travels in the East, had done any translation; they were not sufficiently acquainted with the language to undertake such a task. *Hau Kiou Chooan* was certainly the first translation from the Chinese that was associated with the name of an English merchant. When it appeared in an English dress, it was natural that questions should arise: Was the merchant, whose name was Wilkinson as Percy revealed in 1774, the translator? Or was he only the translator of a translation? Or, quite likely, was the whole thing simply a literary hoax, like

¹ *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Edmund Malone*, ed. Arthur Tillotson (1944), pp. 189, 192.

² For translations of Confucian books, see Cordier, *Bibliotheca Sinica* (1904-8), II, cols. 1368-95.

³ The French versions of the Chinese tragedy and the stories from *Chin Ku Chi' Kwan* were published in Du Halde's *Description de la Chine* (1735). There were two English versions: one by Brookes in *The General History of China* (1736), and the other by Green and Guthrie in *A Description of China* (1738-41). Percy reproduced, with some verbal changes, Green and Guthrie's version of the tragedy in *Miscellaneous Pieces relating to the Chinese* (II, 105-223), and that of the Chinese matron in *The Matrons* (19-86). The story of the matron was adapted by Voltaire in his *Zadig* (1749) and by Goldsmith in *The Citizen of the World* (1760-61), letter xviii.

Walpole's *Letter from Xo Ho* and Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*? It was an age of ingenious 'fakes'—the age of Macpherson's *Ossian* and Chatterton's *Rowley Poems*. And, unfortunately, there was nobody in London who knew enough Chinese to settle the issue: there was certainly no Chinese with a fairly good knowledge of his own language, to whom Percy could appeal. Percy did try to gather further information; and in 1800, when a new edition of the novel was contemplated, he wrote to Lord Macartney for proof of its authenticity.¹ But it seems that his effort was fruitless, and the new edition was never published.

This question of authenticity has now become one of historical interest: it is a reflection of the state of Chinese scholarship in Europe in the eighteenth century. There can be no doubt about the authenticity of *Hau Kiou Choaan*. The Chinese original, a quaint work of popular fiction, is still available, though seldom read. Strangely enough, whatever interest modern Chinese scholars have in the work is barely kept alive by the existence of foreign versions, of which Percy's was the first. But in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was immensely popular and regarded as one of the ten masterpieces of prose fiction; 'otherwise', as Percy rightly says, 'a stranger would not have been tempted to translate it'.² And this popularity accounts for the number of translations and adaptations in many European languages in the nineteenth century.³

As to the questions of the Wilkinson manuscript and its transmission, they can never be settled definitely in the absence of new materials. But a comparison of Percy's version with the original does reveal a few things that may be of some interest. We do not know who the translator was, but we can see quite clearly how limited was his knowledge of Chinese. Until recently, Chinese books, with the exception of school texts, were printed without marks of punctuation, and paragraphing was seldom used. It was the first duty of the reader to punctuate properly the text and differentiate one paragraph from another. The unskilled reader is apt to mis-punctuate and misread. And then there are passages which are ambiguous, difficult to punctuate, and even puzzling to skilled readers. Now, misreadings of this nature abound in *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Paragraphs run together; sentences run together; and dialogues become statements and statements become dialogues. The discrepancies between the original and the translation are really considerable. In the Preface to his *Fortunate Union* (1829), a fresh translation of the novel, Sir John Davies has given a verdict on Percy's work: it is 'little better than a copious abstract' of the Chinese original.

¹ J. Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, VIII, 341-42.

² *Hau Kiou Choaan*, I, xi.

³ See Cordier, *op. cit.*, III, cols. 1755-56. Cordier registers 12 titles up to 1904. Sir John Davies's *The Fortunate Union* (1829) is on the whole an adequate translation in English.

This limited knowledge of the Chinese language on the part of the translator accounts, I think, for a large number of omissions. Of the poetical passages, which are interspersed throughout the work, the majority have been omitted. Some are translated, but not in full. Sometimes four lines in the original become three or two in the translation—at best a bare summary of the ideas or sentiments involved. One instance may be cited to show how omission has obscured the sense. Percy's version gives the following line: 'Who regards the little demons of the wood?'¹ In the original we find two sentences, one answering the other, which may be rendered thus:

Whilst the demons of the wood
Have a limited stock of tricks,
The old priest
Possesses an infinite art
Of seeing nothing and hearing nothing.

In many places it is indeed difficult to ascertain whether the translator was solely responsible for the omissions, for Percy, as he says quite explicitly in his Preface, made further omissions.

But if the translation is on the whole a condensed version, it is in certain prose portions quite literal, being a word-for-word rendering of the original. It seems likely that the translator was using the Chinese novel as a text in his study of the language.² Percy is right, I think, in saying that the manuscript might have been 'drawn up under the direction of a Chinese master or tutor'. As can be expected, such a version bears the marks of the amateur. But in the literal and rather clumsy rendering of certain portions of the novel are preserved some tricks of outlandish style that people have come to expect from translations of Chinese literature, in verse or prose. 'Hard mouth' means sharp-tongued; 'speaking with two tongues' means verbal inconsistency; the favour one receives may be 'as great as the heaven and earth'; the joy which compassion excites in one's heart is compared to the 'springing forth of tender leaves from the withered branches of a tree', and so on. And such peculiarities of style and manner (or rather mannerism) are well preserved, in spite of Percy's alterations which we shall discuss presently.

Again, the manuscript was in the main a chapter-by-chapter translation, though each chapter was condensed and most of the poetical passages omitted. In the first three volumes of his edition Percy indicates the places where the chapters in the manuscript began; and these agree entirely with the chapter divisions of the Chinese version. I have

¹ *Hau Kiou Chooan*, iv, 86.

² Curiously enough, the Chinese novel was often used by Westerners in China as a language text: it was still used as such in 1904, when a special edition was published with notes in English. See Cordier, *op. cit.*, III, col. 1757.

before me a Chinese edition of four volumes, of which the first two contain five chapters each, and the third and fourth four chapters each—eighteen chapters in all. It seems that the Portuguese portion which constitutes considerably less than one-sixth of the manuscript,¹ was drastically condensed, so that the whole manuscript (as Percy tells us in the Preface) was composed of sixteen chapters only. And Percy made further changes: he thought the chapters were 'of inconvenient length' and re-arranged them, not always properly, into thirty-eight chapters. Sir John Davies is justified when he says that 'the real divisions of the romance are, without any adequate reason, confounded in the "Pleasing History"''.²

It was this translation, about five-sixths in English and the remainder in Portuguese, incomplete, inaccurate, though in certain portions quite literal (so far as we can make out), that Percy edited and published for the English public. In his Preface and Notes he tells us what he had done with the manuscript. He translated the Portuguese part and edited the English part. The manuscript was not very legible, and some portions of it, especially the Portuguese part, were so obscurely written or over-written that he had to guess at the meaning. There were missing passages and missing pages, and more than once he had to 'throw in a few words' in order to smooth a transition or bridge a gap.³ A number of pages in the manuscript contained 'an appearance of indelicacy', and he had to take the trouble either to suppress them altogether or 'soften' them in the interest of decorum.⁴ And then there were dull passages and passages that forestall our curiosity⁵; these he had to cut or reduce, knowing that English readers could not possibly be interested in Oriental prolixities. Equally remarkable is the liberty he took to transpose episodes. 'Once or twice', he says in the Preface, 'where the incidents were inartificially conducted, a discovery which seemed rather premature, hath been postponed for a few pages.'⁶ Finally, he 'improved' the language in the way he improved the popular ballads, though he seems to have tried to retain as far as possible the peculiar manner of Oriental writing. His footnotes contain a large number of readings from the manuscript, and they give us an idea of what the language of the manuscript was like and how Percy altered it. Here are some of the more interesting of the alterations:

Wilkinson MS.

Is she so clean?

could not see very clearly.

Percy

Is she then so circumspect and blameless (II, 65)?

had but little discernment (II, 172).

The Portuguese portion begins from p. 62 of the fourth volume of *Hau Kiou Chooan*; see Percy's footnote.

¹ *The Fortunate Union*, I, viii.

² *Hau Kiou Chooan*, II, 37, 219; III, 115; IV, 162.

³ *Ibid.*, II, 158; III, 57-58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 181-82, 208; II, 235.

⁵ *Hau Kiou Chooan*, I, xxii; for instance, see III, 27; IV, 7-8.

Wilkinson MS.

Percy

They will make any thing dead to be
alive.

Every one is governed by an under-
standing, a memory, and a will.

hath a very hard mouth.
would you return dry and empty?

break his head and swell his eyes as
big as lanthorns.

There is no water fairer than she.

red papers with great letters of
welcome writ upon them.
with my gate always shut.

like a precious stone fallen into dung.

Who scruples to say the thing that is
not (II, 218)?

Every one hath an understanding, a
memory, and a will to direct him
(II, 234).

is very bold of speech (III, 37).
would you return back without taking
any refreshment (III, 34)?

fall upon him and beat him severely
(III, 38).

I believe that her complexion is fair
and clear as the most limpid stream
(III, 169).

red papers with congratulatory in-
scriptions (III, 174).

in the greatest reserve and retirement
(IV, 128).

like a precious stone that is irre-
coverably lost (IV, 146).

Most of the alterations were made in the interest of idiom and decorum. But much of the original diction, downright and racy and decidedly Oriental in flavour, is gone. One wonders whether his 'improvements' are improvements at all.

As a story, *Hau Kiou Chooan*¹ does not have much to recommend it. Like many other works of popular Chinese fiction in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the story of *Hau Kiou Chooan* is centred on two idealized characters: the hero, a youth of exceptional intellect with an iron will and great physical power; and the heroine, a symbol of the beautiful, true and good, capable of rising to any emergency. They saw each other, and they loved; but each had to go through a series of intrigues and hair-breadth escapes before they could be united and live 'happily ever afterwards'. Round about them are a number of characters, good and bad, sharply distinguished as white is from black. There are no gradations, no shades, in characterization. Among the 'good' characters are fearless censors, brave generals, impartial magistrates; and among the 'bad' are corrupt mandarins, debauched libertines, tricky eunuchs, wicked uncles, and the ubiquitous ignorant rabble. The story rambles on, from episode to episode, and those are by no means always ingeniously contrived. Percy knew all these defects. But, as he says in his Dedication to Lady Longueville, 'at a time when this nation swarms with fictitious narratives of the most licentious and immoral turn', this curious work from China has its

¹ *Hau Kiou Chooan* in Chinese means a story of a happy union, *Hau Kiou* (now pronounced *hao chiu*) being an allusion to the first ode in the *Book of Songs*. It first appeared about 1660, and remains anonymous.

value as a moral disquisition. Starting with scenes of virtue in distress and ending with scenes of virtue rewarded, it bears some resemblance to the sentimental fiction of England in the eighteenth century.

And there is also another reason why Percy found the work valuable; namely, it gives a faithful picture of Chinese manners. Unlike most of the Oriental tales that grew popular from the beginning of the eighteenth century—Addison's antediluvian tale of Hilpa, Harpath, and Shalum (*Spectator*, nos. 584–85), or Gueullette's extravagant 'History of Mandarin Fum Hoam' (1725)—*Hau Kiou Chooan* shows less of the marvellous and wonderful and a greater regard to truth and nature. If it is defective as a work of fiction, it is nevertheless valuable as a *document* on the 'workings [of] the human mind under all the peculiarities of a Chinese Education.'¹ It gives the 'true character of a living people' better than any account of China in a collection of voyages and travels, just as a page of Fielding will give the foreigner a truer notion of the genius and spirit of the English than whole volumes of *Present States of England* or *French Letters concerning the English Nation*.² Percy was something of a *philosophe*. Like the *philosophes* of the period, Voltaire and Montesquieu and Goldsmith, he was interested in *mœurs*. And he knew well that nothing could illustrate the spirit and manners of a people better than what had been produced by the people themselves. On the title-page of *Hau Kiou Chooan* he quotes with approval a passage from Du Halde's *Description de la Chine* (II, 258):

Il n'y a pas de meilleur moyen de s'instruire de la Chine, que par la Chine même: car par là on est sûr de ne se point tromper, dans la connoissance du génie et des usages de cette nation.

The most remarkable thing about Percy's editing of the Chinese novel is his annotation. His numerous notes are worth studying, not because they are new or striking, but because they are a part—and an important, almost integral, part—of the work. One who is acquainted with what had been written on China by European authors up to the middle of the eighteenth century can hardly expect in Percy's notes anything that is original: Percy's information about China is naturally second-hand. But he was most conscientious in gathering information for the elucidation of the novel. From the very beginning of his work he had planned, not only to edit and emend the text, but also to explain the uncommon customs and manners of China so as to make the events in the novel more intelligible to the English public.³ For this purpose, he borrowed books from Captain Wilkinson, from Dodsley,⁴ from the library of the Earl of Sussex, and probably from many other sources. In his Preface to *Hau Kiou Chooan*

¹ H. Hecht, *Thomas Percy und William Shenstone* (Quellen und Forschungen, Bd. 103), p. 60.

² J. Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, vii, 250.

³ See V. H. Ogburn, *R.E.S.*, ix, 31–33.

⁴ *Hau Kiou Chooan*, I, xvi–xvii.

he gives a list of twenty-six books, a number of them in many volumes, from which he had quoted for his notes. That there were so many books on China is not at all surprising, for European information about China by the mid-eighteenth century was already considerable. What is surprising is that he went through so many volumes, some of which are by no means easy reading. And it was this annotation, rather than what he had annotated, that won the approval of his friends. In September 1761 Shenstone, who had received an advance copy of the novel, wrote: 'Your Annotations have great merit.'¹ On 25 July 1762 Grainger, who had tried to arrange the publication of the work, wrote: 'You have been at great pains in collecting your notes to the Chinese History. They throw much light upon it; and, to deal frankly with you, I think they constitute the most valuable part of your book.'² Such remarks must have gratified the industrious editor.

Let us glance through these notes. Most of them are brief, but there are lengthy articles—on porcelain and pottery, pagodas, religion and morality, *gin-seng*, tea, wines and spirits, shrubs and herbs, Confucius, mandarin and literary examinations, women and their family life. A number of them run to several pages. Certainly, no novel had been so fully annotated, and no notes in a work of fiction had been so fully documented. But Percy knew what he was doing: he was at once elucidating an imperfect manuscript of a Chinese novel and compiling a little handbook on the Chinese people. In his Preface to *Hau Kiou Chooan* (I, xxv) he says:

He [the Editor] was desirous that the History and Notes taken together might be considered as forming a concise, and not altogether defective account of the Chinese, such as might be sufficient to gratify the curiosity of most readers, and to refresh the memory of others.

Percy's industry was indefatigable. When the book was in the press, he was still collecting information, which he published in additional notes appended to each volume. It was hoped that the notes might prove 'no unwelcome relief' to the text when it was found dull and tedious—they might even procure the book a second perusal.

Hau Kiou Chooan must be the only work of fiction in the eighteenth century that is equipped with an index, to both the text and the notes. Some of the items are worth lingering over. Under the 'Chinese' one finds two headings: 'the dark side of their character' and 'the bright side of their character'. Under the first heading are:—affected; ceremonious to excess; cheats, the greatest in the world; crafty; corrupt; cowardly; effeminate; great toppers; greedy of gain; insincere; phlegmatic; proud; slavish; superstitious. A fairly long, and I hope exhaustive, list! And under the second heading, the bright side of their character, are:—complaisant;

¹ H. Hecht, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

² J. Nichols, *op. cit.*, VII, 280-81.

decent; dexterous; dutiful to their parents; fond of literature; ingenious; industrious; loyal to their princes; modest; of few words; patient; studious. Some of the items seem to cancel each other: it is amusing to find a decent and modest people proud, insincere, crafty, cowardly, and the greatest cheats in the world. It is rather difficult to strike a balance between the two sides of the Chinese character; but on the whole the dark characteristics outweigh the bright ones.

And this leads me to say a word about Percy's view of China. Percy was no sinophile, certainly not a 'sinolator', though for a few years before he edited folk ballads and romances he had worked intently on Chinese materials. He had no *rêve chinois*—no illusion whatever about China. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were, roughly, two types of accounts of China: those given by missionaries, especially the Jesuits, and those given by adventurers. They presented two divergent pictures of the country, not easily reconciled. The missionaries, who had had some contact with the literati of China and conceived, as some of them did, a passion for Confucian books of wisdom, tended to emphasize the brighter aspects of the country. On the other hand, merchants and travellers whose contact with the Chinese was largely confined to people of their own class on the China coast and whose experience in the East was not always happy, tended to paint a rather gloomy picture of the country. Of the untravelled Europeans, some took the Jesuit's view, and others continued to beguile themselves with voyages and travels, with fantastic stories of the mysterious East. Percy made use of both sources. He studied, as nobody else did so seriously, the works of Jesuits; but he did not ignore Captain Dampier and Lord Anson, whose accounts he used to check the information he derived from Le Comte and Du Halde and other missionaries. He read all, or almost all, but approved of few. It seems that he was forever balancing between the two sides of the Chinese character, and so falling into impertinent digressions and an apparent inconsistency. In his *Hau Kiou Choaan* and in his *Miscellaneous Pieces relating to the Chinese* (1762) he touched upon various aspects of Chinese life some of which he was pleased to extol; yet he was never carried away by the enthusiasm for the *magots de la Chine* that had reached its height by the mid-eighteenth century.

'A man of sense, learning and curiosity', as Hurd once called him, Percy was essentially a collector—a collector of quaint specimens of foreign literature as he was a collector of quaint specimens of English and Scottish ballads. And what an indomitable collector! In dealing with Chinese materials he was more scrupulous and less dogmatic than most of his contemporaries, though somewhat uncritical and by no means always judicious. And in spite of his editorial liberties, he must be remembered as the first man, so far as we know, who introduced the Chinese novel into Europe.

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

THE BLEEDING CAPTAIN SCENE IN *MACBETH*

Most editors and commentators have rejected, in whole or part, the scene in *Macbeth* in which the bleeding captain and Ross tell of the fortunes of battle and the prowess of Macbeth.¹ As there is no substantial bibliographical evidence to justify this rejection, they are forced back to the unreliable æsthetic discrimination of an alien style, at least when they take the trouble to justify what seems to be little more than an editorial convention of long standing. Similar doubts have been expressed about the authenticity of the *Troilus and Cressida* prologue, and amount to little more than an editorial failure to realize that Shakespeare, as he showed quite clearly in *Henry V*, was as capable of writing a formal heroic prologue as any man. When an apparently alien passage arouses suspicion it is usually wiser to ask whether it corresponds to some particular genre or tradition, and whether it has any demonstrable Shakespearian precedent or currency, before assigning it to Middleton or Chapman, whose alleged ability to achieve the sonorous glory of the *Troilus* prologue is, on the whole, more dubious than Shakespeare's. There can be little doubt that the Folio text of *Macbeth* represents a drastically curtailed version of the original, and that the Hecate scenes are non-Shakespearian, inserted, presumably, to bring witchcraft up to date, just as the additions to *The Spanish Tragedy* were intended to replace an outmoded presentation of madness.² Middleton's responsibility, even for the two songs which *Macbeth* and *The Witch* share in common, rests on flimsy evidence, and it is only by a wild extension of that same evidence that he can be credited with the 'bleeding captain' scene. As a preliminary to the discussion of that scene, it may be remarked that certain lines:

As two spent swimmers, that do cling together,
And choke their art.

and

Or memorize another Golgotha,

and

Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,

¹ Act 1, Scene 2.

² This theory of replacement is plausibly stated and expanded by L. L. Schücking, *Die Zusätze zur 'Spanish Tragedy'*, Leipzig, 1938.

have the ring and concentration of Shakespeare, and are not unworthy of his genius.

The 'bleeding captain' scene perpetuates the Senecan tradition of the fifteen-nineties, and its genre is that of circumstantial narrative, or, more precisely, heroic narrative, used, for instance, by Kyd when he makes Andrea's ghost narrate the events that determine the action of *The Spanish Tragedy*. Even more on the heroic plane is the long narrative of the fall of Troy in Marlowe's *Dido, Queen of Carthage* which is, possibly, the partial and indirect inspiration of the scene in *Macbeth*. The 'bleeding captain' scene differs from these earlier examples not in kind but in presentation. It does not degenerate into rant, it is pared of superfluities, and the few parentheses that it admits are graphic or relevant to the initial presentation of the hero. The signs of 'English Seneca' are, however, palpable: 'slave' as a term of abuse; such adjectives as 'direful' and 'dismal'; the phrase 'Curbing his lavish spirit'; the personifications, 'Fortune' and 'Bellona'; and the chief evidence that the style is being patronized by a writer who has matured beyond it is found in the metrical flexibility, the controlled use of alliteration, and, above all, in the shortness of the speeches.¹

The genre and its tradition, then, have been defined, and were at least twenty years old when *Macbeth* was written. It would be superfluous to demonstrate the currency of circumstantial heroic narrative, with, and later without, Senecan colouring, in Shakespeare's work; but for precedent for this scene it is not necessary to go back to the period of Shakespeare's apprenticeship. *Hamlet*, with its heavy debt to early Senecan practice, preserves what is, in the strictest sense, a copy-book specimen of the genre in the recitation of 'Æneas's tale to Dido',² a parody, it has been plausibly suggested, of Marlowe's treatment of the same theme. There is, or course, no similarity of function. The recitation in *Hamlet* is presented as a characteristic stage rant from which Hamlet draws, as it were, the premises of the great, logical soliloquy with which the scene ends.³ The player's 'cue to passion' is an important spur to Hamlet's thought and action, but indirectly and by analogy. The scene in *Macbeth* is directly and obviously relevant, serving no wider purpose than that of presenting the events that precede Macbeth's first encounter with the witches, and consequent assumption of the role of tragic hero. Its scope is that of a prologue, and one feels that Shakespeare would have cast it in that conventional form had he not realized the dramatic superiority of starting the play off on the 'blasted heath'.

A close comparison of the scene in *Macbeth* with the recitation in

¹ But see the final paragraph of the present paper.

² *Hamlet*, II. ii. 472 ff.

³ *Hamlet* II. ii. 576 ff.

Hamlet shows that there are many points in common. In the critical stage of the war, Duncan is betrayed by Cawdor just as Priam and Troy were betrayed, but one has to turn to Marlowe and Virgil for instance of that.¹ A little closer, but still remote, is the 'bleeding captain', who is, by implication, like Pyrrhus 'total gules'—sufficiently so, at least, for Duncan to describe him as a 'bloody man'. The captain's report on the battle,

Doubtful it stood,

hints briefly at Pyrrhus who stood,

And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

but is crystallized in a different and richer simile. After a few lines of circumstantial detail comes:

And Fortune on his damned quarry smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore,

an extension of the admittedly common description of Fortune used by the First Player:

Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune, all you gods
In general Synod take away her power.

Both scenes make use of epic simile, but what is especially significant is that these similes are substantially the same. In *Macbeth* we find:

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection,
Shipwracking storms, and direful thunders <break>:
So from that spring, whence comfort seemed to come,
Discomfort swells.

and in *Hamlet*:

But as we often see against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death: anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region. So after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work.

Pyrrhus 'new a-work' corresponds to the 'Norwegian Lord' who
Began a fresh assault.

The *Hamlet* imagery of 'total gules' and 'heraldry more dismal' is implicit again in the speculation that Macbeth and Banquo

meant to bathe in reeking wounds,

and the statement that they

Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe

¹ Shakespeare was familiar with Virgil's epic, or at least with the books that deal with the fall of Troy. Whether he read the original or a translation one cannot say, but he was certainly acquainted with something far closer to the original than Marlowe's play.

recalls, rather more doubtfully, the image of 'Pyrrhus' bleeding sword' already suggested by Macbeth's

brandish'd steel,
Which smok'd with bloody execution,

redoubling its strokes on Priam.

Ross's lines in the second part of the scene:

Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit. . . .

repeat the Senecan adjective 'dismal' ('With heraldry more dismal'), and, though substituting 'Bellona' for 'Mars', sustain the image of 'his armours, forg'd for proof eterne'. The 'self-comparisons' have no place in the *Hamlet* speech, where Pyrrhus and Priam are 'unequal match'd'; but the merely verbal parallel, 'rebellious arm 'gainst arm', and

His antique sword
Rebellious to his arm,

is suggestive.

It seems, then, that vague echoes of the *Hamlet* passage were running through the mind of Shakespeare, or the alleged collaborator, when he penned the 'bleeding captain' scene. It is possible to follow the memory process even further back, though doubtfully valid. There is, however, one downright Senecan line in the captain's narrative,

Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th' chops,

which derives, if it derives at all, not from the Player's speech, but from the source of that speech in Marlowe's *Dido*,

Then from the navel to the throat at once
He ripp'd old Priam.¹

Correspondences such as these could have no value for assigning an anonymous play or scene to Shakespeare, since, apart from being slight, most of them belong to general stock. Nevertheless, they acquire a certain weight when it can be shown that they are common to two passages of the same genre, one by Shakespeare and the other purporting to be Shakespeare's. Shakespeare, who built often enough on his past achievements, as the striking similarities between *Macbeth* and the earlier and unpromisingly Senecan *Richard III* show, was quite capable, even in 1606, of introducing some 'musty foppery of antiquity' in his own good way. The

¹ *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, II. i. 255-6.

impact, conscious and unconscious, of earlier practice on a play like *Macbeth*, fundamentally a tragedy of blood with a considerable revenge theme, cannot be ignored, and the 'bleeding captain' scene, though more mannered than the rest of the play, is no more derivative. Other writers, notably Marston, might have affected the style in 1606, but in view of Shakespeare's known use of it a few years earlier, there seems no reason for suspecting collaboration or interpolation, and the claims of others, pending the discovery of new and decisive evidence, can be set aside.

Whether the scene is preserved in the Folio as Shakespeare wrote it is another matter. There is ample bibliographical evidence and some external testimony to show that drastic cuts were made,¹ and this is one of the scenes most likely to be curtailed, simply because it is not essential to the fabric of the whole play. It would be unwise, therefore, to credit Shakespeare with any especially economical or artistic use of the Senecan norm, for the circumstance of a bleeding captain relating heroic deeds would exercise strong temptation towards the excesses of earlier practice. Beyond this single scene, the whole question remains whether there is any justification for assuming collaboration, or even extensive revision by an unknown hand, in an abridgement of a play that is Shakespearian in all its essentials. A couple of insertions may be admitted, but the loss of the Shakespearian flavour at various points could as well be attributed to insensitive curtailment as to any other factor.

J. M. NOSWORTHY.

NOTE ON *PARADISE LOST*, II. 879-83

on a sudden op'n flie
With impetuous recoile and jarring sound
Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges grate
Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of *Erebus*.

All commentators take 'Erebus' to be, like Tartarus, a synonym of Hell. There are precedents enough for this use, and in *Comus*, 804, Milton himself substitutes Erebus for Tartarus. But in *Paradise Lost*, where he is careful of his cosmology, he uses the names distinctively and more in accordance with ancient Greek poetic usage. Tartarus is used twice, each time to designate the Hell into which Satan and his followers, like Cronus and the Titans, were thrust; Erebus is used this once, to designate the dark surrounding void of Chaos out of which Hell and the new World of Man were created. In Greek mythology Erebus was the primeval darkness, and in Homer, the nether darkness in particular on the passage from

¹ Simon Forman's account of a performance of *Macbeth* which he saw in 1611 clearly shows that episodes and speeches have been lost, but there is no reason to assume a very considerable loss.

Earth to Hades; Hesiod says that Erebus and Night sprang from Chaos, and that from Erebus and Night sprang Aether and Day—a genealogy which Milton quotes and discusses in his *First Academical Exercise*. The consonance of ideas can leave no doubt that Milton's 'Erebus' is the 'illimitable Ocean' of 'eldest Night and Chaos, Ancestors of Nature', revealed to the view of Satan and his companions from the wide open gates of Hell. What a climax to this already admired passage is that one tremendous and prospective word, 'Erebus'!

B. A. WRIGHT.

DR. JOHNSON ON THE IMAGINATION: A NOTE

In his recent critical biography, *Samuel Johnson*, Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch analyses ably and with clarity Johnson's imagination, but too much in Hobbesian and strictly neo-classical terms. He is most provocative in his discussion of the 'Life of Cowley', which Johnson himself, not altogether unreasonably, considered his best. Mr. Krutch is acutely aware that in the passage on the Metaphysical poets Johnson makes some vital distinctions in a re-examination of his whole theory of poetry and the imagination twelve years after his *Shakespeare*.

Johnson in the 'Life of Cowley' does Pope the usual disservice (Mr. Krutch follows suit) of referring only to half¹ of the well-worn passage in the *Essay on Criticism*:

But Pope's account of wit is undoubtedly erroneous: he depresses it below its natural dignity, and reduces it from strength of thought to happiness of language.

If by a more noble and more adequate conception that be considered as Wit, which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is, upon its first production, acknowledged to be just; if it be that, which he that never found it, wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new, but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; and the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders more frequently by what perverseness of industry they were ever found.

Now Pope's *complete* sentence is:

True Wit is Nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
*Something, whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.*

Wit here, as frequently in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is virtually equal to *imagination*. We must guard against reading into this more than Pope intends; to be candid, we cannot always be sure just

¹ Johnson's conversational attacks on Pope's definition show this same oversight.

what Pope does intend in his 'philosophical' poems, since he is a great poet but remarkably deficient in intellectual synthesis.

Yet the couplet ignored by Johnson and Mr. Krutch seems close to what Johnson means by his far more incisive definition, except that 'new' is not specifically mentioned and is to be found by implication in freshness of expression rather than of thought. This paragraph from the 'Life of Cowley' with much justification Mr. Krutch takes as a touchstone to Johnson on imagination. He is aware that what Johnson grants the Metaphysicals—novelty, thought, learning—is shrewd backhanded censure of many of the followers of Pope. He is of course right in saying that Johnson calls Cowley 'undoubtedly the best' of the Metaphysicals. He concludes: 'that fact makes it almost unnecessary to observe that if he saw very clearly what he did see, there were other things to which he was completely blind as well as completely deaf'.

This appears so eminently reasonable, so judicious a summation—for Johnson shows in this 'Life' and elsewhere limitations of just the sort indicated by Mr. Krutch—that one would be persuaded except for one fact. Though he quotes the passage, Mr. Krutch fails to explain why Johnson, supposedly having demolished Pope and set up his own very fine conception of true wit, finds it necessary to continue:

But Wit, abstracted from its effects upon the hearer, may be more rigorously and philosophically considered as a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike. Of wit, thus defined, they have more than enough. The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together. . . .

This is certainly much closer to Coleridge than to Hobbes, especially to part of Coleridge's famous passage on imagination in *Biographia Literaria* (XIV):

This power, first put in action by the will and understanding . . . reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects. . . .

Johnson gives us two autonomous conceptions of wit; he prefers the first and regards it as more congenial to poetry. But the lover of metaphysical reasoning¹ is not in the second instance merely defining false as opposed to true wit. There is a deeper purpose or more ambiguity in Johnson's mind than Mr. Krutch's analysis and final pronouncement indicate.

Johnson uses 'combination' instead of 'reconciliation'; that to him (and to many quite reasonable people) the resemblances of the Metaphysicals are often 'occult', the yoking 'violent', is explained by his talking about an

¹ 'As ethics or figures, or metaphysical reasoning, was the sort of talk he most delighted in. . . .'—*Anecdotes of Mrs. Piozzi*.

extreme school of poets, who fascinate as such as they repel him, else he would not give and take back so many half-compliments. He is writing to the top of his bent, mainly to relegate this group to a position below the neo-classical poets, yet partly to investigate an admirableness which he senses but cannot altogether understand. When Johnson in speaking of his own 'noble wit' says that 'to wit of this kind the metaphysical poets have *seldom risen*', that 'their thoughts are often new, but *seldom natural*', he grudgingly feels it necessary to leave for them a small opening to greatness *on his own terms*. And it cannot be said that Cowley fills this wicket. The impact of the Metaphysicals crystallises Johnson's not entirely fair but justifiable dissatisfaction with Pope's conception, makes him see clearly that neo-classical poetry, if it is to survive, needs rejuvenation. For he does appreciate the sinew, the charged thought of metaphysical poetry—and perhaps a little more than this. In a sense, he would like to graft the metaphysical stem on the neo-classical root. Furthermore, he feels it necessary to evolve for the Metaphysicals a rigorously philosophical definition of wit, 'abstracted from its effects upon the hearer' (thus quite apart, perhaps, from personal taste and music?), which, ironically, bears revolutionary seeds.

Orthodoxy triumphs in his choice of Cowley—a choice dictated by the booksellers, though Johnson would probably have made it of his own accord—mainly because of Cowley's reputation and smoother verse. The Metaphysicals never sing to Johnson. They need someone like Pope, an admirer and 'versifier' of Donne, to polish them into poetry. Yet Johnson ridicules Cowley's aberrations more than Donne's: of the quotations from Donne with comments in the 'Life of Cowley', eight are hostile, three ambiguous, five qualified with praise. The continuous quotations from Donne in the *Dictionary* are surprising in number and range.¹ Johnson definitely gives Cowley first place, but 'to emulate Donne, appears to have been his purpose'. I do not mean to stretch a paradox as far as one of Cowley's conceits. Johnson is no champion of the Metaphysicals; he finds in them nothing to threaten Dryden and Pope. But he finds what he misses in much neo-classical poetry. His essay is the first important study of the Metaphysicals; it remains the point of departure for understanding them.

He writes about Donne and his followers with less praise, but in much the same way he had written in 1756 about Sir Thomas Browne, the prose-poet whom he admires with such exasperation:

His style is, indeed, a tissue of many languages: a mixture of heterogeneous words, brought together from distant regions, with terms originally appropriated

¹ For instance, in a two-volume edition (revised): first volume—195 times; second volume—244 times. This far exceeds quotations from Cowley, and Donne is quoted under every letter except X. Quotations are from *Songs and Sonets, Elegies, Epithalamions, Verse Letters, Satires, Epicedes*.

to one art, and *drawn by violence into service of another*. He must however be confessed to have augmented our philosophical diction: and *in defence of his uncommon words* and expressions, we must consider, that *he had uncommon sentiments*, and was not content to express in many words that idea for which any language could supply a single term.

But *his innovations are sometimes pleasing, and his temerities happy*: he has many *verba ardentia*, forcible expressions, which he would never have found, but *by venturing to the utmost verge of propriety*; and flights which would never have been reached, but by *one who had very little fear of the shame of falling*.

This is one of Johnson's flashes of heightened perception which amount to genius, over-riding his disapproval of Browne's lack of decorum. In the case of the Metaphysicals he almost but not quite breaks through, perhaps because they write poetry rather than prose, and his ear for poetry was too completely attuned to Dryden and Pope. Though Johnson does not share Coleridge's conception of individuality and organic fusion, his *discordia concors* is a striking adumbration, more perceptive than is usually supposed.

W. B. C. WATKINS.

SOUTHEY'S REVISION OF HIS *LIFE OF WESLEY*

In his preface to the third edition (1846) of his father's *Life of Wesley*, Charles Cuthbert Southey remarked: 'it is a subject of regret that the work has not had the benefit of the Author's corrections (with the exception of a few alterations and insertions, which I found made by my father, as was his custom, in his own copy).' These 'alterations and insertions', although he did not indicate what they were, the laureate's son attempted to supply; but as his handling of his father's life and correspondence leaves much to be desired and as his edition of the *Life of Wesley* is the basis of the excellent Oxford reprint of 1925, it may be well to examine the original manuscript¹ in order to learn just what changes Southey made.

The new matter consists chiefly of fifteen notes, to all but three of which Canon M. H. Fitzgerald has, in the Oxford reprint, appended the initials R. S.² Over a hundred lines have also been added to the body of the work, from which some fifteen lines of the first edition have been omitted. Furthermore, fifteen lines which the author crossed out have been allowed to remain, and in approximately twenty instances one or more words have been deleted or added or a misprint corrected. Perhaps it is worth while to point out the principal additions to the body of the work, since these are not indicated in the Oxford reprint. They are: i. 4,³ twenty-three lines ('he

¹ The two volumes of the second edition (1820) of his *Wesley*, in which Southey made (in his own hand) his corrections and additions, now form part of the somewhat extensive collection of their author's works at the John Hopkins University.

² The notes overlooked are the first on i. 249, that on ii. 19-20, and the second on ii. 216 of the 1925 edition. Only the final paragraph of the note on ii. 109-10 is new.

³ Page references are to the Oxford edition of 1925.

was driven' through 'suffer him') substituted for five and a half; i. 5, eleven lines ('She survived' through 'Matthew and Samuel' and 'The former' through 'their ministry'¹) substituted for one; i. 42, four lines added ('On another' through 'see Him'); i. 206-7, twenty-five lines added ('How deeply' through 'he desired'); i. 248-9, twelve lines added ('More would' through 'in his wake'); ii. 20, four lines added ('He made' through 'preaching'); ii. 21, thirteen lines added ('For some' through 'Coleford'). There is one addition, too short to be included in this list, which is interesting not so much for the unsuccessful attempt to correct an inaccuracy as for the dry humour and the increased vividness of expression. In the second paragraph of the work Southey at first wrote: 'It has been remarked, with much complacency, by the Jesuits, that in the year of Luther's birth Loyola was born also.' This he changed to what seemed to him a fuller presentation of the Jesuit point of view: '... in the year when Luther began publicly to preach the abominable errors of his depraved mind, Loyola was converted to the service of the Lord, and commenced his war against the Devil.'

In the copy of the *Wesley* which contains Southey's revisions, the first ten lines of chapter one and the footnote, two pages later, beginning 'So Samuel Wesley' are crossed out.² Both passages were, however, reprinted without change by the author's son and hence by Canon Fitzgerald. It is not certain why the passages were cancelled or why the cancellation was disregarded. Assertions made in the footnote appear to be mistaken; and the beginning of chapter one,³ since the deletion ends in the middle of a sentence and since a footnote to the fourth of the crossed-out lines was not cancelled,⁴ Southey probably intended to re-write but failed to do so, or the re-written slip was lost. To a footnote on the following page⁵ he added a sentence which his more cautious son suppressed: 'I take this opportunity of saying that I never perused any book more utterly devoid of

¹ Southey put this entire passage in quotation marks and wrote after it: 'MS. p. 1.' The exclamation mark after the last word in the first footnote on the same page was substituted by C. C. Southey for his father's 'p. 109'. Another small error of the younger Southey's is putting into footnotes on i. 37 and i. 39 additions which were to have been run into the text without paragraph division. He also misspelled 'Bolzius' in one of the added notes (i. 68) and he overlooked his father's correcting 'Evelin's' to 'Evelyn's' (i. 195, the Oxford reprint has this right) and 'the old resource of ejected ministers' to 'the resource of ejected ministers in ancient times' (i. 367; the Oxford reprint changes 'should seem' to 'would seem').

² A line is also drawn through the second part of the heading of chapter one, the part which reads 'Wesley's childhood and education'.

³ The subject matter will be clear from the first sentence: 'The founder of the Methodists was emphatically of a good family, in the sense wherein he himself would have used the term.'

⁴ This footnote originally began: '"Let me", says the humble moderator, (Bishop Croft) "speak a word . . ."', but in revising he added, in the parenthesis before 'Bishop Croft', the words 'my ancestor'.

⁵ Oxford ed., i. 4, after 'History of the Dissenters, vol. ii, pp. 223, 236.'

candour, nor more thoroughly imbued with the spirit of sectarianism and faction than Mr. Orme's *Life of Owen*.' He appears to have ignored the 228 pages of criticism prepared at the request of the Methodist Conference by Richard Watson and published as *Observations on Southey's 'Life of Wesley': being a Defense of the Character, Labours, and Opinions, of Mr. Wesley, Against the Misrepresentations of that Publication* (1820).

The notable feature of Cuthbert Southey's edition is not, however, his father's additions and changes but the notes which Coleridge had written in his copy of the life. It would be interesting to know if these have been accurately and completely reproduced.

RAYMOND D. HAVENS.

REVIEWS

The Earliest English Poetry: A Critical Survey of the Poetry Written before the Norman Conquest with Illustrative Translations. By CHARLES W. KENNEDY. London, New York and Toronto. Oxford University Press. 1943. Pp. viii+375. (No price given.)

Old English poetry is peculiar in that (because of fragmentary preservation, anonymity, and unfamiliar background) questions of scholarship are the key to a full approach. Unlike the *Aeneid* or the *Iliad*, *Beowulf* cannot be something midway between a translation exercise and matter for mature study: it must be one or the other. Confronted with a welter of critical writings the student who has passed the first stage either gives up on the brink, *aer he in wille hafelan hydan*, or plunges in before he has the equipment to recognize the essential from the minute, *ut . . . pleraque differat et praesens in tempus omittat*. Therefore a book which presents compactly an account of the corpus of Old English poetry, of the problems of interpretation, authorship and so on attaching to each poem, and of the extant manuscripts, is performing a valuable service; and it is here rather than in its appreciative judgements that Professor Kennedy's work is admirable. After reading his account the student can return to the poems with his mind more aware, yet neither overburdened nor biased.

Professor Kennedy has no axes to grind. He aims at presenting the facts about the poems in the light of modern scholarship, and while one is aware of the massive knowledge which makes this presentation possible it is never allowed to intrude. It is difficult to imagine a clearer account in fewer words of the Cynewulf signatures, or of the problem of the 'Storm Riddle'. Where (as in his denial of allegorical significance to the *Seafarer*) he expresses personal opinion or offers suggestions of his own (he proposes *Aeneid VII* as the source of the *hæp-stapa* passage) he does so unemphatically. In wider questions, such as the provenance of *Beowulf*, he avoids argument, giving an eclectic account and referring the reader to more detailed studies. His bibliography is in keeping with the rest, both concise and sufficient.

To turn from the presentation of the facts about Old English poetry to appreciative judgements is disappointing. Here Professor Kennedy has fallen between the stools of popularization and scholarship. He would not only give the student sound information but persuade a wider audience of the greatness of his theme. Therefore all his illustrations are metrical renderings in Modern English—a procedure out of key with other aspects of the book. He flogs his critical horse: 'The *Christ III* reveals descriptive power of a high order of excellence (p. 242) . . . descriptive painting of unusual excellence (p. 243) . . . outstanding in felicity of imagery and rhythm (p. 247) . . . *Christ III* ranks high for the energy of imagination, felicity of diction, fluency of rhythm, and wealth of rhetorical adornment by which a borrowed and conventional subject is shaped into new patterns of dignity and grace (p. 248).' Comment which reduces a poet to the level of a prizewinner in a make-do-and-mend competition can only irritate the mature judgement and mislead the tyro. In view of the excellences of the book it is a pity that Professor Kennedy did not keep his two aims separate.

NORMAN CALLAN.

John Milton's Complete Poetical Works. Reproduced in Photographic Facsimile. A Critical Text Edition Compiled and Edited by HARRIS FRANCIS FLETCHER. Vol. 1, Poems, etc. Upon Several Occasions, 1673. Poems, both English and Latin, 1645, With Fugitive Printings, Manuscript Copies and Their Collations. Urbana. The University of Illinois Press. 1943. Pp. vi+465. To be issued in 4 volumes, \$20 a volume, or \$75 a set.

Professor Harris Francis Fletcher has set before himself a scholar's standard of completeness in planning his edition of Milton, who of all English poets merits a scholarly edition. All students of Milton are lastingly in debt to him for the care and completeness with which in the present volume he has provided facsimile reproductions of all the important textual authorities both in print and manuscript for the Minor Poems.

In his collation he has had two aims: to set forth the exact typographical reading of each text, comparing copies where they are available; and to record variants between the several editions. In carrying out the first aim he seems in our view to go too far, in the second not to go far enough. And in both the failure springs from a misapprehension of what, we submit, is the true purpose of textual criticism, namely to establish and elucidate the text.

Mr. Fletcher exercises the utmost care in exposing typographical aberrations or curiosities, hunting them from copy to copy; but the labour is largely fruitless. In line 47 of *The Hymn* (the so-called 'Nativity' ode) he notes that the lower part of 'g' is broken in all 1673 copies examined. Now in my own copy of 1673 this 'g' has its tail intact: but the fact has not the slightest significance. In punctuation the broken commas and blurred periods, not infrequent in these early texts, are investigated under high magnification. In some places it is satisfactory to know what stop was actually printed, as at line 103 of *The Hymn* where 1645 has an obscure mark after 'thrilling': 1673 has a clear comma, the stop needed; Columbia editors read period for 1645; Mr. Fletcher shows under high magnification a broken comma. But most often the exposure of the exact nature of the compositor's mistake throws no light on the reading of the text. Typographical errors such as an italic capital 'S' where a roman is intended are not worth recording. The most that we ask of a textual editor, and it is much, is to help us to know what his author wrote.

In interpreting the second function of his collation, to furnish variant readings of the several editions, Mr. Fletcher is unduly modest. He gives the facts and makes decisions, but reserves critical judgement. For example, he takes the text of 1673 as his basis rather than that of 1645 because 'this edition is the last Milton himself could have seen through the press'. The decision needs a reasoned defence. Neither Aldis Wright nor Beeching considered the textual alterations in 1673 (apart from that in *The Hymn*, Stanza xv) important, or probably to be attributed to Milton. But clearly some of them are. In 'At a Solemn Music', line 6, 1673 corrects 'content' to 'concent', the characteristic Miltonic musical term of exact definition; and in line 23 corrects 'perfect' to 'perfet', Milton's chosen spelling, necessary to convey the sound he wanted. On the other hand 1673 often *miscorrects*, giving the easier reading or more common spelling for that of the author, which is more unusual. Thus in *Comus*:

- l. 474 sensuality 1673: sensualtie Trin. MS.: sensuality 1645.
- l. 547 meditate upon 1673: meditate MSS., 1637, 1645.
- l. 556 stream 1673: steam MSS. 1637, 1645.
- l. 580 further 1673: furdur MSS. 1645.

By 1673 Milton had long been totally blind, and on the whole the edition published that year is a far less faithful record of his intentions in such matters—important to him—as spelling and punctuation than that of 1645. There is a strong case for taking 1645 as the cardinal text and giving collations under it. Further, the collation should embrace the MSS. Here again Mr. Fletcher has avoided a critical task: he has nowhere given his judgement on the relation of the MSS. to the printed text. A judicious recording in his *apparatus criticus* of the MSS. readings along with those from printed texts would have given the basis for such a judgement, as well as for the setting and solving of particular textual problems. Disputable readings in *Comus* are rare, but two, unnoticed by Mr. Fletcher, are worth attention:

1. 553 drowsie frighted Bridgwater MS., 1637, 1645, 1673. drowsie flighted Trin. MS., Masson, Grierson, Elton.

Professor Lascelles Abercrombie in a subtle piece of analysis worthy of his poetic scholarship has rejected the reading 'flighted', and has made it clear that in the Trinity MS. Milton first wrote 'frighted', and that his own or another hand has corrected *r* to *l*. (I am convinced myself that it was another hand.)

1. 988 presents a reading on which Milton himself changed his mind: That there eternal summer dwells. Trin. MS. second draft, 1637, 1645, 1673. There eternal summer dwells. Bridgwater MS., Trin. MS. first draft, and *erratum* 1673.

'There', not 'That there', was Milton's first and last thought.

His collation of 'Lycidas' also loses much by his omission of manuscript readings. The most notable variant in the poem, 'he well knew' for 'he knew' in line 10, does not appear in Mr. Fletcher's collation, only in his note to the text of 1638, and even here he does not tell the whole story, for 'he well knew' has the authority of the Trinity MS. as well as that of the marginal correction in Milton's hand in at least two copies of the printed text of 1638.

In general Mr. Fletcher's collation has been carried out with exemplary care, but a few cases may be pointed out where his guidance might mislead:

- p. 60. *Comus* 167. *app. crit.* This note is confused and inadequate. It should be made clear that the printer of 1673 has omitted a line and transposed the next two lines, making a muddle of the end of the speech, and he seems to have tried to improve matters by his *erratum*: 1637 and 1645 stand firm on the text of the two MSS. p. 372. Mr. Fletcher takes Edward Phillips's very incorrect text (*Letters of State*, 1694) as his copy-text for Milton's 'Sonnet to Sir Henry Vane'. He should rather have chosen the first printed version of 1662, which is much closer to the poet's own version in the Trinity MS. (For example, Phillips reads in the first line 'in sage Councils old': 'counsel' of 1662 is clearly right and is the reading of the MS. He collates the 1662 text in his *apparatus criticus* but wrongly in the last line: '1662 opens with "In peace", then continues with the entire 1694 line'. But in fact 1662 omits the subsequent 'in chief' of the 1694 line, and reproduces the line as Milton wrote it.

We have noted a number of small inaccuracies here or there in the *apparatus criticus*, but these are inevitable in a work of such intricacy and scale. A plea must be made however for one of Milton's special spellings which had ill luck with the printers: 'buisnesse' for 'business'. In *Comus* l. 167 Milton spelt this word 'buisnesse' (v. Trin MS.), and in 1637 it found its way for the only time into his printed text: (he endeavoured in vain to get it through into *Paradise Lost*. v. Morgan MS.). But alas! Mr. Fletcher prints the 1637 version as 'businessse' (*app. crit.*, p. 60)—the compositor's mistake we may be sure.

The photographic reproductions of the different early printings of Milton's lines on Shakespeare and of his 'Sonnet to Sir Henry Vane' are a welcome gain to the edition, and a still greater boon is offered to students in a full reproduction of the Bridgwater MS. of *Comus*, now for the first time made accessible, by permission of the Earl of Bridgwater. Mr. Fletcher's transcription of this is on the whole so faithful and accurate that it is worth while to point out a few errors and aberrations. There seems no adequate reason for inserting, throughout the printed version, the flourish ^u after the letter *S*; this has no significance whatever except as a feature of the scribe's handwriting. The contraction *p* (=per) is twice wrongly expanded: p. 310, l. 186, 'appear' should be 'appere'; and p. 332, l. 827, 'pursuit' should be 'persuit' (Milton's chosen spelling). On p. 303, l. 3, 'Climes' should be 'Clymes'; p. 306, l. 93, 'Soo' should be 'Soe' (no doubt about the 'e'); p. 311, l. 215, 'spiritts' should be 'speritts'; p. 316, l. 342, 'teares' should be 'feares'; p. 320, l. 421, 'meager' should be 'meagar'; p. 322, l. 489, 'trivall' should be 'trivall'.

The tercentenary of Milton's *Poems* of 1645, the most beautiful collection of pure poetry ever offered by a poet to English readers is honorably commemorated by this magnificent volume, the fruit of much devoted labour, and much technical skill. All students of Milton look forward eagerly to the volumes to come and especially to the next two which will carry the text of *Paradise Lost*.

HELEN DARBISHIRE.

The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and Edmond Malone. Edited by ARTHUR TILLOTSON. Baton Rouge: Louisiana. State University Press, 1944. Pp. xxvi+302. \$3.50.

The Louisiana State University Press has undertaken to publish, under the general editorship of Professors D. Nichol Smith and Cleanth Brooks, the complete correspondence of Bishop Percy; the undertaking is one of considerable magnitude and of first-rate importance to all eighteenth-century scholars. Percy's antiquarian and literary studies, which were co-extensive with his long life, led him into correspondence with men of similar tastes, among them Grainger and Shenstone, Tom Birch and George Ashby, Dr. Farmer of Emmanuel and Tom Warton of Trinity, Sir David Dalrymple (Lord Hailes), Evan Evans, George Steevens and Edmond Malone. Much of the research in which his own publications involved him was conducted through the post; few men depended so largely upon the aid, advice, and knowledge of friends, and he in his turn gave freely of his own stores, which were considerable. The work is expected to run to some eight or ten volumes, each of which will be devoted to the letters that passed between Percy and a particular correspondent—a method of publication of which Malone did not approve, but which, as the Yale edition of Walpole's letters shows, has a good deal to be said for it. The volume now published is the first of the series.

The Percy-Malone correspondence as now collected by Mr. Arthur Tillotson consists of sixty-eight letters printed from manuscripts, many of which are published for the first time, twenty-five by Percy, two of which are drafts only, and forty-three by Malone, with extracts of nine others from printed sources. Mr. Tillotson records nineteen missing letters, all save one by Percy, and there are probably a few others of early date which have disappeared without leaving a recognizable trace. The correspondence begins in November 1779 with a third person note from the Dean of Carlisle, continues in August 1783 with an ac-

knowledge by the Bishop of Dromore of the gift by Malone of his *Second Appendix* to his *Shakespearian Supplement*, and ends in May 1811 with a letter from Malone. Malone's letters are not only more numerous than Percy's, they are more important, and, it must be admitted, far more readable. I agree with the succinct estimate Mr. Tillotson gives in his Introduction: 'The difference between the activities of the two correspondents finds full reflection in their letters. Malone, at the height of his powers, engrossed in his work, and enjoying the friendship of many notable people in London, has much to tell. He is never at a loss; his letters are longer, and keep their character to the last. Percy's are answers, and become formal when his failing sight forced him to dictate them. He was busy with his diocesan duties and his letters show him, as far as literary matters are concerned, to be living largely in the past.'

Percy, who was isolated at Dromore, could hardly have had a better correspondent. Malone gave him news of his friends and his enemies, kept him posted in current literary gossip, and told him of new and forthcoming publications; his own labours on the editions of Dryden and Shakespeare naturally loomed large in his letters and he wrote freely of the problems involved and the methods adopted, of his search for materials and purchase of books, of the progress he made. He was not, unfortunately, quite so communicative about his all-important aid to Boswell, but he did explain to Percy that Boswell's failure to delete the tell-tale entry in the index to the *Life*, 'Percy, Dr., his Reliques of Ancient Poetry', when he had cancelled the passage to which it referred, was not due to artifice, but a mere oversight. Other topics which sustained the correspondence were the compilation, publication, and sale of the so-called benefit edition, which benefited no one, of Goldsmith's *Miscellaneous Works*, to which Percy's Memoir was prefixed; Malone's pious promotion of the scheme to erect the monument to Johnson in St. Paul's; and his prolonged and successful efforts to keep The Club alive. Malone was the Treasurer of The Club and his devotion to it was so great that he refused to belong to any other society; he therefore responded readily to Percy's requests for news of its welfare; on no subject was he more informative and on no subject is his information more valuable to-day.

Mr. Tillotson has done his work well. An editorial note states that 'simple contractions of common words have been expanded when there can be no question of the full spelling', and that otherwise there has been no alteration of the manuscript: presumably this method of dealing with the text will be adopted in the other volumes. The Introduction, dealing as it does with the literary activities of the two friends during the period of their correspondence, gives a judicious estimate of Malone's great editions of Dryden and Shakespeare which is most welcome; the scholarly annotation of the text sets a standard for the succeeding editors. I have read Mr. Tillotson's notes with attention and found very little amiss. Malone's figurative use of the term 'bush-firing' (p. 19) to describe George Steevens's anonymous attacks might have been given a note and compared with the well-established 'bush-fighting', especially as the Oxford Dictionary records no example. The note (p. 20) on Johnson's translation of Sallust should read: 'Nothing is now known of this translation', as Boswell had it before him. Malone was, for once, in error in giving the year of Percy's election to The Club as 1764, but it would have been as well to have confirmed the contemporary corrector by a cross-reference to p. 235, or, better still, by giving the precise date, 15 February 1768, from the *Annals of The Club* (1914), p. 8. Mr. Tillotson has, I am confident, used this important book, but he nowhere mentions it. There are some omissions in the excellent index: the article, 'The Club', opens

with a solid block of figures, eight lines deep, but it lacks the three earliest references, pp. 6, 12, 16, and Malone's collection of portraits of members is mentioned on p. 275 as well as on p. 175; Malone's uncle Antony, p. 188, is not entered under his name, neither is James Wilkinson, p. 192, the translator of *Hau Kiou Chooan*; as Jessie Stuart's *Ode to Thomas Percy occasioned by reading the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (pp. 179, 194) is an anonymous work, even to Percy himself, it should be entered under its title.

The book is typographically a joy to read and to look at; it is indeed very doubtful if our own presses could have at this time produced so handsome a volume.¹

L. F. POWELL.

Southey. By JACK SIMMONS. London: Wm. Collins, Sons & Co. Ltd. 1945. Pp. 256. 12s. 6d. net.

In spite of the decline in his reputation (due partly to Macaulay's superficial and unjust essay on his *Colloquies*) Southey has attracted a fair amount of attention during the century since his death. He got into the *English Men of Letters* series as early as Landor and De Quincey and more than twenty years before Hazlitt and Tom Moore, and in 1917 the first part of a large-scale biography by Dr. Haller appeared. Possibly owing to the intimidating bulk of the material, both printed and manuscript, now available, this volume has not been followed up; and Mr. Jack Simmons, sensibly recognizing that no-one wants to read a thousand pages on Southey, has now successfully completed the more modest, far more useful, and not less difficult task of giving us in a little over two hundred pages a sketch of Southey's life and a sufficiently detailed estimate of his literary work, with a good index and full references for the benefit of any who may wish for more information than he has room to supply. There are also eight excellent illustrations—though one cannot help regretting the absence of the Opie portrait discussed on pages 103-4, and entering the customary vain protest against putting on the dust-cover a silhouette portrait mentioned by the author (p. 8) but not likely to be seen by many of his readers.

Dowden's *E.M.L.* biography, though rather slight, was a scholarly piece of work, not without a certain charm of style; nor has any important new knowledge come to light since he wrote. Yet there can be no doubt of the superiority of Mr. Simmons's book. In 1879 Dowden thought proper to be rather more reverential in tone than now seems necessary, with the result (among others) that Southey's mental development was not made very clear. Mr. Simmons, from his vantage point two generations later, makes plain how much justification—and it is a good deal—there was for Southey's claim that in his attitude to the French Revolution and its consequences he had merely 'altered his position as the world went round'. Naturally it was impossible for men like Hazlitt and Shelley to see him as anything but a renegade and a hireling in fact if not in intention. But in spite of his acquired authoritarianism Southey remained a reformer (more uncompromisingly so, perhaps, than Wordsworth or Coleridge); in our own times he would certainly have felt more in sympathy with the Fabian Society and the Labour Party than with, say, Neville Chamberlain or Lord Beaverbrook—just as Macaulay would have been more at home with Beaverbrook than with Beveridge.

¹ The only printer's errors I have noticed are 'Launceton' for 'Launceston' (p. 212) and 'Naugle' for 'Nangle' (p. 233); the editor cannot be held responsible for the misspelling, twice repeated, of Malone's Christian name on the dust cover.

I am not sure, however, that Mr. Simmons is any more successful than Dowden in explaining the change in Southey's religious outlook, which moved in less than ten years from Deism to whole-hearted and even bigoted support of the Anglican Establishment.

Still, even if some things remain puzzling, it is not for want of honesty and of sympathy with all parties concerned. Once or twice, indeed, Mr. Simmons seems almost too severe on Southey—for instance, in the matter of his stupid but hardly, I think, deliberately 'malicious' review of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, the authorship of which may now be taken as fully established.

Actually, the most controversial as well as the most interesting parts of the book are those concerned with the interpretation of Southey's character and temperament and with estimating his positive achievement as a writer. On the former point Mr. Simmons does, I believe, succeed in showing, partly with the aid of some striking quotations from Coleridge and Carlyle (see especially pp. 49-50, 185-6), that Southey's 'methodic virtue', his routine habits, arose not from a deficiency but from an excess of sensibility, rigidly restrained in the interests of health and even of sanity itself. As a young man Southey was remarkably like Shelley, in appearance and even in voice as well as in temperament; and it is interesting if profitless to speculate on what Shelley might have become if he had been, like Southey, the son of a poor man, with his way to make in the world. But whether, to come to the second point, we can go on to assume, as Mr. Simmons does in effect (p. 210), that *if only* Southey had not had to turn to prose both to support his family and for reasons of health, and *if only* he had written more about England, and less on outlandish subjects like those of *Thalaba* and *Madoc*, he would have been a major poet, is a much more doubtful matter. Lamb once jokingly accused Wordsworth of saying that he could have written Shakespeare 'if he had had a mind', adding slyly: 'It is clear that only *the mind* is lacking.' Southey in fact lacked 'the mind', and even in prose he remains just interestingly second-rate, a bad historian and critic (on account of his bigotry), a good biographer when prejudice did not interfere, and always an excellent if not quite first-rate letter-writer.

Finally, while endorsing in a general way Mr. Simmons's praise of the simple lucidity of Southey's prose style, I do not find it easy to agree that he pursued 'a lonely path' in setting himself to be 'plain and brief'. No one will deny that Coleridge, Lamb, and De Quincey derive from the rhetorical prose-writers of the seventeenth century while Southey reminds us rather of Swift and Defoe. But it is not true, as Mr. Simmons seems to think, that the plain style had been neglected since Defoe. Fielding, Goldsmith, Sterne and several of the letter-writers, Cowper in particular, may be cited from the eighteenth century, while among Southey's contemporaries not only Cobbett but, in essentials, Leigh Hunt, Landor and Hazlitt belong to the 'plain' rather than the 'ornate' group, and two of these at least can claim to be Southey's equals if not his superiors in mastery of prose style.

I have noticed very few misprints or slips. On p. 66, 12 lines from the foot, should not 'infected' be 'infested'? On p. 70, in the second verse quotation, read 'Dost' for 'Doth'; p. 133, l. 15, 'Mrs. Southey's income' must be a slip for 'Mrs. Coleridge's'; p. 160, 6 lines from the foot, surely 'had' should be 'has'? On p. 185, l. 19, read 'irritability'.

R. W. KING.

The Frontiers of Drama. By UNA ELLIS-FERMOR. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd. 1945. Pp. viii+154. 8s. 6d. net.

This is above all a 'full' book. Easy reading it decidedly is not. But its contents can be analysed and enlarged upon almost line by line; and whether or no with acquiescence nearly always with profit, direct or indirect. One aspect of its utility is therefore plain. Given an advanced—a very advanced—class of students of Drama (such as universities that emphasise the study are coming more and more to provide) richer material for discussion could hardly be found than is offered them here; a term's work, moreover, in a single chapter of it, thoroughly threshed out. And let us at once note besides this admirable feature. The invitation is not—as would probably have been the case a generation or so back with a book of such academic distinction—rather to discuss literature cast in dramatic form, but to deal with dramatic art itself, and as nearly with the living art as the critical dissecting-table will allow. Much of the matter is illuminating and stimulating and of a particularly seminal quality, matter which should fructify in a student's mind; part, it must be owned, despite the exemplary pains which the author has evidently—at moments perhaps, a little too evidently—lavished on it, may remain somewhat hard to understand. The present reviewer, for an example, would not undertake to support a close cross-examination on the exact meaning lodged in the chapter on 'The Equilibrium of Tragedy', nor yet confess the failure wholly due to his own lazy-mindedness. Miss Ellis-Fermor's arguments may at times be incapable of reduction to simpler terms; and she does admittedly (the book's very title warns us of this) set herself some extremely difficult problems. But—to criticise—is she not occasionally tempted by the very difficulty, solving it as she then does with such remarkable address? She devotes, for instance, some of her toughest arguments to proving that—whatever Milton's own intent—*Samson Agonistes* is a great piece of dramatic art—specifically this—and one which will answer fully (it must then follow) to the test of the right sort of theatre. Dr. Johnson, incidentally, comes in for some very sarcastic snubbing because he will have none of this. (There really would have been a terrible turn up between the two could she so have provoked him face to face.) It is a most interesting chapter, and the student may profit much from it; yet indirectly so (more than directly it may be) by the opening up during the argument of the many side-issues, which give upon other aspects of religious drama. As to *Samson* itself, does she not a little overstate her case?

Troilus and Cressida makes another difficult subject. It is not a play that lies in any technical sense upon the 'frontiers of drama', and most critics have been content to remark upon what seem to be its obvious shortcomings and to leave the matter thereabouts. Miss Ellis-Fermor confesses that she herself 'was for many years satisfied to see in the play a momentary failure of Shakespeare's artistic power'. But, being converted, she flies, as convertites will, to the extreme, and sets out to prove that it is a *great* play, one of the greatest. She is full of dialectical resources, and manœuvres them most subtly; it is at times as if we were being treated to a disputation in theology. But there is one pervasive and—may it be contended?—insurmountable difficulty. No work of art can be *proven* great, a play least of all. It may be demonstrably full of the finest intellectual qualities, and yet not effectively even a good, much less a great, play. The trouble may lie in that single word 'effectively'. There is nothing derogatory in it; let that be clear. A work of art must be effective, must express itself fully in its own terms, it must not need explanation. The verdict lies in the

impression to be made—and more or less spontaneously—upon its audience. Once made, all sorts of explanatory riders can, of course, be offered, and the critic should be ready with the why and wherefore of his praise or blame. We may posit, too, an audience as competent in judgment as, for a fair hearing, the actors must be in its performance. But in drama as in music, the critic has a primary right to 'I cannot tell you what a good tune is, but I know one when I hear it'. It is all so empirical as that. And how aggravating a thing is art if it can so undermine really logical and self-respecting methods of criticism. The quality of audience and performance can, of course, be questioned, and the empirical verdict be continually appealed against. But here will always lie the primary test. And Miss Ellis-Fermor's assemblage of arguments for the play's greatness resembles a little too much the gathering of fuel for a fire. Excellent fuel. But will the fire light?

What is the mysterious element which gives a play *life*, while its absence in whole or part leaves it hobbling at best? Proof of it, we are apt to say, lies in performance. That leaves us still uncertain; for if to say that a play 'will not act' condemns it, to say that it 'acts well' may be but a left-handed compliment, implying merely that it gives a clever actor full scope for his tricks. To assert that *Troilus and Cressida* is not alive or would not act will be palpably untrue, and any honest performance will disprove this. But if it were a tithe as full of life as are most other of the plays, be they as simple fairy-tales as *The Merchant of Venice*, as imagination-crammed as *Hamlet*, or as passion-crammed as *King Lear*—well, Miss Ellis-Fermor would not be left so gallantly (if a trifle fanatically) arguing in its favour.

What is this spark of life? Again, like the good tune, it is hard to explain; but the sensitive hearer will recognise, the alert critic be able to identify it when it is flashed upon him. Take 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen . . .': that, given the occasion, lets the actor set glowing in the man the lurid light which will burn throughout the play. 'I saw Othello's visage in his mind . . .': in that single simple speech which follows to the assembled magnates sounds unforgettably the 'heavenly truth' in Desdemona, that even Iago could not kill. 'Then there was a star danced, and under that was I born'; and Beatrice has our hearts, nor shall we wonder that, despite herself, she wins Benedick's. *Troilus and Cressida* is by no means devoid of these incandescent moments, nor of whole scenes and characters that have some such kindling power; but it is too seldom sufficient for a continuing or a spreading flame. To take the simplest of tests: how often does our interest in a character survive its absence from the scene; how often do we find ourselves positively welcoming its re-appearance? It is in her neglect of these simple considerations that—may one suggest?—Miss Ellis-Fermor is apt to go astray. For while it is a complex and profound art, this art of playwriting as Shakespeare has by now developed it, still it remains with him based upon certain simple strengths, the chief of them this dynamic power, which can equally animate and give human value to a Hamlet or a Gravedigger. There is much to be learnt, we may gratefully admit, exercising on the frontiers of drama, but not to the cutting adrift from its strongholds. She saddles Shakespeare, here, for instance, with an approach to his subject, which she confesses, has so far practically never been his. But 'when we remember how unusual a discussion of abstract themes is in Shakespeare's plays as compared to Chapman's, Tourneur's and Beaumont and Fletcher's among his contemporaries, we may well pause to ask what it means in *Troilus and Cressida*'. Agreed: we should. We owe him

every sort of exploration before we discountenance any of his maturer work. But *did* he here make this unusual approach? And, if he did, may that not be at least one of the reasons why the play is not—to the unregenerate—all that it might be, even as his usual approach helped produce plays which differed in certain vital respects—from Chapman's, at any rate? Miss Ellis-Fermor, the convertite, sternly forbids herself that easy way out, must prove instead that here is one of the very greatest of the plays, to which we have so far been only an unworthy audience. Again, these things are not to be proved. And while the play may even have buried in the matter of it all she divines there, the intent, the philosophy; while all the fuel may be collected, still if the fire will not light, or only burn by fits and starts, or smoulder dully—it is not a great play. A less respectful suggestion, yet one which may finally be more creditable to Shakespeare, is that now and then in the writing, he found himself reduced to the same sort of efforts to make it a good play that Miss Ellis-Fermor so industrially employs to prove it a great one. Success in either sort of case is apt to be somewhat barren.

The play was written, it has been said, for an Inns of Court entertainment. This may be pure guess-work, and should be given on present proofs no greater credit; but it would help account for certain things in it, and for its general tone, if we may suppose law students to have expected a slightly professional flavour in their festal fare. Passages of dry quibbling—that, for instance, between Paris, Pandarus and Helen—no longer very modish, nor now particularly Shakespearean, we may imagine slipped in as suited to the occasion. If we ask why Ulysses is one of the most vivid of the characters, why his speeches on Degree and Order and those keyed to them have such a fine and free flow, Miss Ellis-Fermor herself suggests for an answer that we have had something of the sort before in the thoughts on kingship of the Histories. Here, then, will be theme digested in character, and Shakespeare going his more accustomed way. And Lawyers might certainly find a tart humour in the conversion of the whole Trojan War from heroic romance to dialectic gingered with rank murder.

The easiest explanation is not always the wrong one. And where is the play ever more spontaneously alive than when Troilus and Cressida themselves are love-making, in his

but alas,

I am as true as truth's simplicity
And simpler than the infancy of truth.

or her

Prithee tarry:

You men will never tarry.
O, foolish Cressid. I might have still held off,
And then you would have tarried.

—though there is no very deep argument in that? It is in its truth to character that its quality lies, in this and the easy beauty of it, in what this is patently worth, and no more.

Miss Ellis-Fermor must choose. If Shakespeare the practising dramatist, whom she so faithfully studies, had meant to make of this deep-bitten pessimist's philosophy a living framework for his play, would he have left it in such embryonic form, in such need for disinterment? One can offer an alternative suggestion. She will hardly relish it, however, and it is not in the least proveable. That mirror-like imagination could reflect many and various ideas. To some it would add life; and then we have, no matter its faults, the unquestionable masterpiece; for some, less sympathetic, admirably working mechanism and

little more, but for the irrepressible touch of inspiration here and there. And this cynic flavour given to the great Trojan War, pungent and tonic though it may be, is not one to set the flame of his genius happily burning. Are we to treat him primarily as dramatist or philosopher? There is a tell-tale sentence in Miss Ellis-Fermor's very admirable book. She speaks of 'the great plays that follow this one in psychological sequence, *Timon of Athens* and *King Lear*. . . .' But even to mention those two in the same breath implies, surely, a momentary forgetfulness that one is writing about a dramatist at all. Shakespeare would no more be above borrowing for an occasion a likely attitude towards the Trojan War than he had been unwilling to turn Cinthio's story of the Moor to the account of Othello. And if one fructifies under his hand and the other does not—well, he must exercise better judgment next time. This attitude towards him, as towards a great artist who makes occasional errors, a human being, who can now and then be overcome by some such disaster—personal, was it?—as wrecked the writing of *Timon*, is really (one may urge) with all its guesses and consequent errors, a truer tribute to his genius than one which enshrines him as the centre of a philosophy, and ceases to distinguish between his better plays and his worse.

HARLEY GRANVILLE-BARKER.

English Pronunciation and Shorthand in the Early Modern Period.

By WILLIAM MATTHEWS. University of California Publications in English, vol. ix, No. 3, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press; London: Cambridge University Press. 1943. Pp. iv+135-214.

The scope and aim of this efficient and useful study are sufficiently suggested by Dr. Matthews' opening sentence: 'The phonetic basis, rough though it may be, of most present-day shorthands temptingly suggested to me that in the many shorthand textbooks and manuscripts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there might be abundant evidence of the pronunciation of English in the early modern period.'

Dr. Matthews, who seems on the way to becoming a pioneer authority in the study of the pronunciation of English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and has already given us a valuable study of the linguistic value of the work of William Tiffin, the most linguistically significant eighteenth-century stenographer,¹ now complements and considerably amplifies the work of Kökeritz² on the linguistic evidence from shorthand textbooks and correlates it with other kinds of evidence on pronunciation.

But he wisely begins by the disarming admission that 'In cold fact, the phonological value of shorthand is much poorer than one might suppose'; and though several interesting probable variants in early pronunciation and some attractive speculations are put forward from the stenographic evidence by Dr. Matthews, it can hardly be said that many definite new facts are established by this new study. But the work of Kökeritz needed supplementing and re-examining, and Dr. Matthews presents a methodical view of a field that is certainly worth the exploring.

After a brief introduction in which the material and method are explained and the chief results claimed are set out, Dr. Matthews takes the reader consistently through the four sections of his study. These treat respectively of the

¹ *English Studies*, July 1936.

² *Studia Neophilologica*, 1934-35, No. 3.

Middle English vowels and diphthongs, of the M.E. consonants, of specimens of shorthand forms from the best textbooks of stenography, and are completed by a bibliography. The new results claimed are set out on p. 143, and include evidence on both vowels and consonants (and consonant groups). The bibliography covers—besides the stenographers and ortho-epists—only recent scientific works on pronunciation, and is not complete even on them. Sweet and Ellis are assumed, it would seem, to be included in their successors. Among works of scholarship of recent years omitted, may be noted the following:—Robert Robinson, the early seventeenth-century phonetician whose work was first made known in the pioneer little study of the late Professor Fiedler; Martin Lehnert's excellent examination of the grammarian John Wallis; and Grosse's work on the significance of the *ea*-spelling.¹

A difficulty which, perhaps, could not be fairly faced in a small study of this kind covering a vast field, is the uncertainty of the exact values of at least some of the Middle English symbols. Dr. Matthews seems to assume dogmatically what may be termed the orthodox phonetic values of his Middle English symbols and to proceed with his historical studies from this accepted foundation. But without agreement on Middle English pronunciation and clear delimitation of our knowledge of it, there is inevitably the chance that some of Dr. Matthews' assumed discoveries of new pronunciation-variants in the later periods may be considered to be invalid. Thus, for example, on p. 146 he seems to take the word *hand* as shewing a Middle English long *ā* pronunciation as the only type from which variants in the seventeenth century are to be deduced. But many scholars would admit both a long and a short vowel in this word in Middle English—the one derived from the lengthened vowel before *-nd* and the other from the inflected forms in which the syllabic division of the Middle English *hande* was between the *h* and the *d*. Indeed some such explanation seems to be necessary to account for spellings in the *Ormulum* and the long open *ē* in Chaucer's *hond* beside the short vowel type which must lie behind the current pronunciation of *hand*.

Yet despite the difficulties and uncertainties inseparable from a work of this relative brevity, all students of early Modern English pronunciation will be grateful for this careful and scholarly work, and it is to be hoped that the suggestions of possible hitherto unnoticed variants will encourage others to delve further into this important subject. In particular, it may be suggested that more attention needs to be paid by students of pronunciation to the vast manuscript material still almost untapped. Investigators in recent years have depended too much on printed books or have been misled by earlier editors of important manuscript material which should be re-checked. It is a pity that Dr. Matthews has not provided an *index verborum*.

C. L. WRENN.

Man and his Works. By EDWARD LEE THORNDIKE. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press; London: H. Milford, 1943. Pp. viii+212. \$2.50; 14s. net.

This book consists of Professor Thorndike's William James Lectures given at

¹ *A Contemporary of Shakespeare on Phonetics and on the Pronunciation of English and Latin*, by H. G. Fiedler (Oxford 1936); *Die Grammatik des englischen Sprachmeisters John Wallis*, by Martin Lehnert (Breslau 1936); *Die neuenglische ea-Schreibung, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der englischen Orthographie*, by Eginhard Grosse (Leipzig, 1937).

Harvard in 1942. These cover a very wide range. They start with an exposition of some general facts about the unlearned mental features of human beings, 'the genes of the mind', from which complex behaviour is developed by learning, the creation of fresh mental connexions. Professor Thorndike then gives his own view that learning depends on repetition and reward. In the light of these basic points the remaining lectures deal with a number of varied topics: human relations in general (Lecture III), the use, understanding and origin of language (Lectures IV and V), the psychology of government (Lectures VI and VII), the psychology of punishment (Lecture VIII), and the psychology of individual and community welfare (Lectures IX and X).

These lectures all contain a great deal of interest, but I will confine my detailed attention to Lectures IV and V, on the psychology of language, which fall within the sphere of interest of the *Review of English Studies*.

Lecture IV deals with the uses and understanding of language. As Ogden and Richards had said, language does much more than express thoughts and feelings. *Inter alia*, it is used to arouse thoughts, feelings and actions in others. Furthermore, this is sometimes a direct process, involving no intervening parallelism between the thoughts in the mind of the hearer or reader and those in the mind of the speaker or writer. These points are familiar to students of Ogden and Richards. Equally familiar is the rejection of accounts of meaning in terms of thoughts of objects or memory images. What is new and interesting is how Professor Thorndike works these points in with his general theory that all learning proceeds by repetition and reward of mental connexions. Roughly speaking, if the meaning of a sentence to a hearer or reader is what the sentence makes him think or tend to think of, positively or by exclusion, then the meaning of the sentence will be a complex of the thoughts which have been connected with its words in his past experience, by occurrence, repetition and reward.

Professor Thorndike is clearly aware that he is then faced with the problem of explaining how new complex sentences can be misunderstood, where all the words are understood. He had conducted experiments to throw light on this subject, and concluded that such failure depends first on failure to give the right weight to the various words in the new sentence, and secondly, on failure to grasp the relations between the words. These points appear acceptable, but I could wish that Professor Thorndike had said something on *how* correct potency and correct grasp of relations are or could be achieved in forming these new complex mental connexions.

In dealing with the origin of language (Lecture V) Professor Thorndike first briefly outlines other speculative theories, including Sir Richard Paget's. He then tentatively propounds a theory of his own. This regards language as developed from meaningless prattle by means of mental connexions of sound with situation, arising at first by chance, but afterwards by repetition and reward. Making use of a rough calculus of probabilities, Professor Thorndike comes to the conclusion that language could well arise in this way in course of time, and that his theory would accord well with the eventual development of highly complex languages from very crude beginnings. Moreover, he sees no valid objection to the theory on the ground of its inconsistency with the number of languages existing at any one time; and he regards the great space of time admittedly required to develop complex languages from such a start as an argument for rather than against his view. He admits, however, that he has not yet solved certain specific problems about the development of language, e.g. the

evolution of language for qualities and relations; but he believes that these problems are soluble along the lines of his theory.

He ends with a hint to psychologists and students of language that vocal play (and I think he means especially the vocal play of children) deserves more attention than it has hitherto received, in connexion with the problem of the origin of language.

These two lectures form about one-fifth of the bulk of the book. It is clear from them that a more detailed account of their subjects from Professor Thorndike himself or under his direct influence, would be well worth having. In particular, such an account might relate the theory to the philology of actual languages; and also clear up some of the outstanding problems in the development of language, in relation to his view of the nature of learning.

THEODORE REDPATH.

Literary Study and the Scholarly Profession. By HARDIN CRAIG. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1944. Pp. xvi + 150. \$2.25.

This is a collection of lectures delivered in the University of Washington with the present conditions of American university life mainly in view; but Professor Hardin Craig has much to say that is of immediate application to the scholar's life and work in this country as well, since his concern is with fundamentals.

Like our own academic mentor, Mr. Bruce Truscott, Professor Craig insists upon the primary importance of research, but he is especially anxious that a larger and more comprehensive attack should be made on literary problems with 'a broader and more catholic scholarship, with less specialization but with equal or greater intensity' (p. 129). This is a theme to which he delights in recurring: 'Any well trained English scholar in a few weeks or months of comparative leisure ought to be, and usually is, able to write books and learned articles and to direct research in any of these literary fields [periods of English literature since the fifteenth century], which, moreover, are so much a unified whole that he cannot afford completely to neglect any of them' (p. 15); 'These specializations within a field like English or history are really quite absurd, since there is no reason why any man cannot master the whole of these subjects or any part of them if he is a properly qualified worker' (p. 123); 'A good Ph.D. ought to be able and willing to write a doctor's dissertation every year during the rest of his life—a somewhat horrible thought' (p. 123). And if it is objected that all fields of study have now been adequately cultivated or that teaching and administrations make too heavy calls on a university teacher's time, Professor Craig would reply to the first objection by recalling as one example out of many his own experiences among sixteenth-century manuscripts in Bodley and the British Museum illustrating the school learning, history, history of religion and history of literature of the time, manuscripts which 'seemed not to have been read by a scholar since the days of John Strype. . . . The whole spectacle seemed to me to be at once an indictment of our scholarship and an invitation to future generations of scholars' (p. 45). His reply to the second objection is even more challenging: 'the mind is capable of far greater reaches than our indolent theories permit us to assert . . . it lives up to about one one-thousandth of its possibilities' (p. 15); 'Shall we think of [Leonardo, Galileo, Newton . . .] as mutations without power of reproduction? I think not. . . . The Elizabethans in large numbers and no doubt the Athenians of the age of Pericles sought for and achieved both versatility and eminence . . . If we had but the courage

to try it out, we too might rise higher in the scale of being and achievement' (p. 21); 'With the advancement of learning, there has been a greater simplification of concepts and inter-relations, so that the job of acquiring an excellent general education is an easier and a more comprehensible job than it used to be' (p. 117); 'Enough time and energy, now diffused, could be saved to do all of our local duties well and at the same time double our productivity' (p. 150).

Time saved and a more catholic, less narrowly specialized, scholarship pursued will enable the scholar to present a better reinterpretation of the past, a better adjustment of values, a better synthesis of the infinitely varied record of nature and human life, and thereby to train his students 'if not to escape the tragic fate which overhangs us in this life, at least to bear it with becoming fortitude' (p. 102), for it is fundamental to Professor Craig's belief that the humanities have to do not so much with the beautification of life as with the living of life, a far broader and truer conception (p. 11).

Professor Craig remarks in his preface that his opinions are for the most part not startling nor of profound originality. But that does not matter. What is valuable is that an elder scholar should have stated, so lucidly and so compellingly, the importance of the humanistic study of English at a time when our whole educational system is under review. The issue of this book in this country would surely help to counteract the perverse influence of the Norwood Committee's report to the Board of Education, whose members recognized the humanistic value of the study of the Classics, but seemed incapable of applying their own words to the study of the culture of their native land.

JOHN BUTT.

Ideas in America. By HOWARD MUMFORD JONES. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London, Oxford University Press. 1944. Pp. xiv+304. \$3.00; 16s. 6d. net.

The recurrent theme of this book is a plea for a larger place in American scholarship for the study of American cultural history. In the first part Mr. Jones has collected some hortatory addresses on this topic delivered over a number of years. With statistical precision he argues the meagre allocation made to specific American studies in the English faculties and in periodicals. In fifty years (1884-1934) *P.M.L.A.* had published 1,405 articles of which only forty-five had anything to do with American letters. 'It is only in the United States', he exclaims, 'that professors of literature are permitted to be scandalously ignorant of their own national achievement.'

In the second part he has included some of his own contributions to the studies he desiderates. Valuable as these are, they in part furnish the explanation of the neglect which he deplures. A study of American prose style from 1700 to 1770 hardly whets the appetite. The writers, he admits, were predominantly theological rather than humanist. Although they were often attacking the monarchical decadence of Europe, their prime ambition was to capture the attention of London. In vain, for they were inevitably provincial and behind the times. The recondite and often irrelevant learning with which they packed their paragraphs was passing out of fashion with us before the end of the seventeenth century. The study of such writers therefore has little more than an antiquarian interest. In this section, however, English readers will find much to interest them in 'The Origins of the Colonial Idea', 'The Drift of Liberalism in the Eighteenth Century', and 'The Influence of European Ideas in the Nineteenth Century'.

In the third section Mr. Jones returns to his missionary task. He suggests that his countrymen return to the practice of the Greeks 'who placed their own culture foremost as an object of study'. The analogy does not wear well, and the author answers himself when he readily affirms that America is culturally a part of western Europe. Later he appeals, somewhat professorially, for a return to idealism in contemporary literature. He deplores the tough realism, which we are apt to regard as an original American contribution to the world's literature, showing that it is the logical development of ideas assimilated from Europe. The remark about the Greeks and a comparison of Medicean Florence with the Golden Age of American Finance indicate that the fundamental relations of world cultures have not been clearly apprehended. That there is much justice in his specific plea may be readily granted, and he scores a noteworthy point in showing how the non-English elements in American culture were too long ignored by the intellectual aristocracy.

English readers can learn much from this book, especially from the sixty-seven pages of well documented notes at the end.

D. M. Low.

Proceedings of the British Academy, 1941. London: Published for the British Academy by H. Milford. 1944. Pp. xii+465. 30s. net.

The standards of the British Academy are high, and the *Proceedings* always contain papers of general interest because of the importance of the contributors. The report for 1941 testifies to the value of the Academy, if only because the Home Office invited the Council to set up a tribunal, analogous to one already established by the Royal Society in respect of scientists, to consider the cases of foreign scholars who were interned or in danger of internment during the critical days of 1940. The figures of those released etc. are given, and appear to be very satisfactory. In his Presidential address Sir John Clapham suggests that some such advisory committee might be of value to the State after the war.

The obituary notices are, as usual, excellent. They include notices of Sir James Fraser and Lord Stamp.

Professor R. H. Tawney's Raleigh Lecture on 'Harrington's Interpretation of his Age' will be of value to many. Professor Tawney emphasizes the fact that *Oceana* is not a Utopia. Harrington's purpose was 'to point a moral from English history', and to show 'that political stability was not to be expected till political institutions were brought into accordance with economic realities'. It was not, Harrington believed, 'the Civil War which had destroyed the old régime, but the dissolution of the social foundations of the old régime which had caused the Civil War'. As a side light on Harrington's desire to be practical I notice that Toland, in his dedication of Harrington's voluminous *Works* (1737), states that the constitution of the Bank of England 'comes the nearest of any Government to Harrington's model'.

Sir George Hill in his lecture, 'The Medal: Its Place in Art' (which contains some admirable plates), comments on a well-known passage in Mr. T. S. Eliot's 'The Function of Criticism'. But the lectures of most direct importance to readers of *R.E.S.* are the late R. W. Chambers's 'Poets and Their Critics: Langland and Milton', and Professor F. P. Wilson's 'Shakespeare and The Diction of Common Life'. Professor Chambers pointed out how much *Beowulf* and *Piers Plowman* have suffered from what he called the 'Higher Criticism', i.e. the theories of multiple authorship. He explained how Professor Manly came to

evolve the distracting theory that the A, B and C texts of Langland were the work of four different men. Manly was using Skeat. Chambers pointed out that, as printed by Skeat, 'the different texts could not be the work of the same author'. When the work on the manuscripts of *Piers Plowman* had been done by Professor Grattan, Chambers himself and others, Chambers and his fellow-workers were prepared to say 'with certainty, that this appearance of multiple authorship is due to scribes, who have modified in different ways the text of the author'. Chambers added to his lecture an admirable note on 'The Pamela-prayer, and other alleged frauds of Milton', demonstrating conclusively another of his contentions—the absurdity of what he calls the 'Lower Biography'. This, of course, is the ridiculous attitude to Milton which has been adopted by some 'scholars' here and abroad on the basis of fictitious stories about Milton's personal behaviour.

Professor Wilson's lecture must have been read by everyone who is in the least interested in the subject. It is a very scholarly discussion, the result of observant reading, of part of Shakespeare's diction. Such a study is specially valuable in the case of common words such as 'will', which may bear its present meaning or may signify 'lust'. Professor Wilson's wide general reading and his knowledge of proverbs (used freely by Shakespeare, but not by Ben Jonson) are brought into full use. I would like to draw attention to his remarks on Walter Whiter's *Specimen of a Commentary on Shakspeare . . . on a New Principle of Criticism derived from Mr. Locke's Doctrine of the Association of Ideas* (1794). The importance of this book was pointed out by Professor J. Isaacs in his contribution to *A Companion to Shakespeare Studies* (1934). Whiter's anticipation of the psychological approach to recent textual criticism makes it of special interest. Professor Wilson has explained—no doubt satisfactorily—the passage

the corner-cap of society,
The shape of Love's Tyburn

in Act IV, sc. iii of *Love's Labours Lost*.

HUGH MACDONALD.

Essays by Divers Hands, being the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom. Vol. XX. Edited by GORDON BOTTOMLEY 1943. Pp. x+112. 8s. 6d. net. Vol. XXI. Edited by WALTER DE LA MARE. 1944. Pp. xviii+124. 9s. 6d. net. London: Humphrey Milford.

While Mr. Gordon Bottomley is content to follow tradition in introducing his team of essayists and their subjects with brief grace, Mr. de la Mare, reminding us that these essays were in fact delivered as lectures, plunges deep into an inquiry into the nature and *raison d'être* of lectures, and, having discovered that there is here an unsuspected gap in the history of literary forms, contributes an acute and felicitous essay which is the outstanding feature of these two volumes.

The first of the two volumes before us is valuable alone for containing the last poem by the late Laurence Binyon, 'a specially beloved Vice-President of the Society'. The poem 'Winter Sunrise' is a singularly beautiful example of his delicate art, and gratitude is due to Mrs. Binyon for allowing its publication in this volume.

There is an unconscious team-spirit in these collections since the lecturers' approaches to the more general questions of literature are inevitably routed through the atmosphere of war. At the same time, since they have not been deliberately selected as a team, there is, here and there, a not unnatural over-

lapping of topics which at any rate affords matter for interesting comparisons. In the first volume Dr. H. V. Routh opens with a learned tracing of the development of 'Humanism' from its beginning as a medieval antithesis to theology, and coming to the present day he pleads that, since science has played a dominating role in the present war and our heads will still be 'full of economic and social reconstruction and scientific progress' (as was also the case in 1919), more than ever we should remember that 'progress without humanism is progress in the wrong direction'.

One has only to look at Holbein's portrait of Erasmus, most human of humanists, to feel friendly towards him, and it is not surprising to find that he had so many English friends, scholars and others, whose names Mr. Henry J. Cowell has gathered together with appropriate passages from the great Dutchman's letters. This is a fitting pendant of miniatures to the previous lecture.

Professor Geoffrey Tillotson gave the Tredegar Memorial Lecture on 'Matthew Arnold: the Critic and Advocate'. The title is based on a distinction made by Arnold himself. Professor Tillotson names Aristotle and Coleridge as supreme examples of men who in different ways were critics, not advocates. Arnold himself was capable of pure criticism that ranks high. But he was not mainly a critic of this kind, and himself spoke derogatively of 'mere literary criticism'. Such a dictum as 'the best that is known and thought in the world' betrayed the partisan, and Arnold's 'highly interested disinterestedness' had a single aim: to produce a certain effect on the British middle class. Professor Tillotson traces through Arnold's various volumes his missionary passion for making the best prevail, and concludes his admirable lecture with these words: 'What Arnold saw drew a multitude of eyes the way his were looking; and still draws our eyes; for the Victorian age, despite all the jibes of its grandchildren and all the bombs and tanks of its great-grandchildren, recedes from us very slowly'.

Next comes a brief excursion by Dr. Marcu Beza into the byeways of Byzantine art and the legends that provided it with subjects. He deals mainly with the legends of St. George and St. Demetrius. Both these saints represent the triumph of good over evil. But Dr. Beza does not omit to illustrate how the cynical and we may add anti-humanist streak in Byzantine folk-lore was prone to equate woman with the devil!

It must be a rare if not unique occasion when 'The Pink 'Un' is quoted before this society. Yet a quotation from that lamented paper provides the wittiest, and perhaps the wickedest variation of a Milesian story which the late Sir Stephen Gaselee traces from Petronius onwards. Its theme is exemplified in the familiar, and shall we say family, version by Coventry Patmore:—

'I saw you take his kiss' 'Tis true?
O Modesty!' 'Twas strictly kept.
He thought me asleep; at least I knew
He thought I thought he thought I slept.'

Those who pursue the less decorous ancestry of these innocuous verses under the guidance of Sir Stephen's urbane and thorough scholarship are not likely to feel that anything has been missed.

After this frolicsome turn comes Mr. de la Mare's Giff Edmonds Memorial Lecture 'A Quiet Life'. He himself calls it a rambling discourse; it is in effect a meditation by an exquisitely sensitive mind on the relation between poetry and

fine books and life, starting from the comforting thought that whatever our other regimentations there is as yet no Controller of Reading.

No less engaging is Mr. Rostrevor Hamilton's investigation of the distinction between verse and poetry. A well-worn theme and one which perhaps fortunately can never come to any final conclusion. In the hands of a poet it is always susceptible of new shades of feeling. Yet the distinction often seems to go no further than personal predilection. After quoting part of Donne's lines to the Countess of Bedford Mr. Hamilton quotes eight lines from Pope's 'Epistle to Miss Martha Blount', beginning at the line, 'She went to plain-work and to purling brooks'. These lines are quoted as an example of lucid verse rather than of poetry. Yet surely they are undoubted poetry, exquisite alike in style and sensibility.

This volume concludes with a lecture by Sir John Martin-Harvey on 'The Player and His Art' which is delightful both in content and manner.

The second volume opens with Dr. Routh again, who examines the prospects of Basic English becoming a world language. As a preliminary he claims a verdict from history that languages which have attained ecumenical status cannot retain the charm and completeness of a native language; the vocabulary becomes colourless, capable of transacting daily business but unable 'to give flood to the human soul'. The premisses to this judgement are at least insecure. Hellenistic Greek so far from lacking the rich vocabulary of the classical era or being restricted in its interests, as Dr. Routh asserts, has a far more copious stock of words which were developed to express a range of human affairs and speculations unknown to the earlier Greeks. Equally disputable is his view of the later development of Latin, and of the reasons why Latin and subsequently French failed to remain or become world languages. In any case Dr. Routh's faith in the possibilities of Basic is limited. He thinks it may survive as an educational instrument to foster conciseness and lucidity.

Lord Dunsany entitles his essay 'Among the Ruins' to express his pessimism concerning contemporary English. His main attack is on the use of nouns as adjectives and he has some salutary words to say. It is merely wilful however to suggest that we are fast losing such adjectives as Roman, luxurious, mysterious. A luxury flat is not the same as a luxurious one, any more than a miracle play is a miraculous play. He objects to 'our Rome correspondent', but we must at least say 'our Barcelona correspondent' to avoid tiresome circumlocutions. English is poor in adjectival formations but rich in the nuances of epithet, so that the use of nouns in this way has been a true idiom since the days at least when 'the funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables'. It is easy to cull grotesque examples from inferior writing, but something more than that is needed to prove the decay of a language.

The pleasures of reading are inexhaustible. They also vary greatly in degree. Those of us therefore who have felt obliged to postpone indefinitely our reading of 'Orion' Horne are grateful to Dr. F. S. Boas for allowing us to survey this minor though interesting Victorian through the medium of his learning and insight. That is a more genuine compliment than to pretend that his interesting essay will send many asking for Horne's works.

As their titles suggest ('Fame versus Fashion in Literature' by Laurence Housman and 'Style and Fashion in Literature' by Clifford Bax) the next two essays overlap to some extent. Mr. Housman probes the question that great writers often succeed with their contemporaries by qualities which later cease to appeal. He does not go very deep, but rather passes discursively from one prejudice to another.

Mr. Bax gets to closer grips with his theme. He begins by deploring the cult of under-writing as a concession to the Little Man. Art on the other hand is essentially aristocratic, and independence of judgement correspondingly rare. Significantly both he and Mr. de la Mare tells us, almost in the same words, that style is the manners of the mind. From this stance Mr. Bax reviews some of the great stylists of English, contrasting the permanence of their merits with the capricious turns of literary vogue.

From these we pass to 'Shakespeare and the Dictators' by Professor de Sola Pinto. This is a learned and illuminating address in which Shakespeare's presentation of the tragedy of the despot is shown to have a great aptness to our times. *Coriolanus* and *Macbeth* are the two plays on which he draws most.

Finally a reverie on 'Tradition and Experiment' by Joseph Bard, beginning with a discussion of the meaning of 'modern', has some pleasant recollections of Paris in 1913 when Bergson was lecturing and Proust was writing, and so arrives of course at Joyce, and turns back again to Keats, Burns and Hardy. A mellow outpouring of a full mind naturally inclined towards the traditional in literature, yet not without sympathy for experimenters, although regretting that they 'are often like Oedipus, laden with a fierce destiny of patricide'.

D. M. LOW.

SHORT NOTICES

English Domestic or Homiletic Tragedy, 1575-1642. By HENRY HITCH ADAMS. New York: Columbia University Press, 1943; London: Humphrey Milford, 1944. Pp. xii + 228. 16s. 6d. net.

The author analyses (sometimes, perhaps, rather overestimating the ignorance of his readers) the moral and religious background and didactic intention of the writers of these plays, which he relates to the moralities, the homilies, and such popular *exempla* as Beard's *Theatre of Gods Judgments*. He rightly insists on the essentially untragic nature of their whole conception of man and of the world, a matter on which he has some important and interesting things to say, but his book consists mainly of painstaking analyses of their surviving plays.

J. B. LEISHMAN.

Tobias Smollett, Traveler-Novelist. By GEORGE M. KAHL. (University of Chicago Publications in the History of Thought and Culture.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: Cambridge University Press. 1945. Pp. xxiv + 165. [No price given.]

Dr. Kahrl's book continues the detailed investigation of the autobiographical and literary background of Smollett's work on which several American scholars have recently engaged. We are provided here with a close consideration of all Smollett's own journeys and of the points of contact between his 'raw experience' and his fiction; with a discussion of his arm-chair travels as editor of the *Compendium of Authentic and Entertaining Voyages* and the *Critical Review* and of the introduction of the 'factual information' thus acquired into his books; and with remarks on the relations in form and spirit between his *Travels* and picaresque fiction and the travel-literature of his time. Dr. Kahrl follows up his subject in all its bearings, and offers fresh material on the topography of *Sir Lancelot Greaves*, the life of Captain Robert Stobo, the acknowledged original of *Lismahago*, and on Smollett's careful use of Apicius' *De Opsonis et Condimentis* for the feast after the manner of the ancients in *Peregrine Pickle*.

While Dr. Kahrl's careful researches have not thrown any very novel light on Smollett, they are useful in supporting accepted criticism by exact facts, and in introducing certain minor modifications of it. It is shown, for instance, that *Roderick Random* is less closely autobiographical than has been thought. On the other hand, the journalistic topicality of

Smollett cannot well be exaggerated, since we learn that Admiral Hore's 'Bellefield', the original of Commodore Trunnion's 'Garrison', can hardly have been out of the builders' hands when *Peregrine Pickle* was written. Most valuable for its bearing on Smollett's work as a whole is Dr. Kahrl's insistence on his comparative isolation from English society. As a Scot, at a time of strong anti-Scottish prejudice, he was practically a foreigner in London, and Dr. Kahrl considers that the tone of his comments on the English scene and the field of his observations are those of a foreigner, shut out from many intimate aspects of the country he lives in.

The book includes reproductions of Rowlandson's illustrations to the novels.

J. M. S. TOMPKINS.

A Bibliography of Sir Walter Scott. By JAMES CLARKSON CORSON. Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd. 1943. Pp. xvi+428. 32s. net.

This annotated bibliography deals, not with Scott's works themselves, but with books and articles relating to his life and works published between 1797 and 1940, excluding certain classes (e.g. poetical tributes to him, dramatised versions of the poems and novels, etc.) but including books and articles dealing largely or exclusively with Scott. As with all bibliographies, there are bound to be oversights, as well as omissions due to a deliberate policy of selection, but the resulting volume remains one which will be of great value to students.

E. C. B.

English Institute Annual, 1942. New York: Columbia University Press; London: Oxford University Press. 1943. Pp. xvi+209. \$2.50; 16s. 6d. net.

These lectures, which were delivered at the 1942 meeting of the English Institute in Columbia University, are classified in three groups under the titles 'Interpretation in Biography', 'Authenticity and Attribution', and 'Personality and Expression in Literature'. The first group comprises three papers, on 'The Ethics of Biography', by M. Maurois, 'The Development, Use and Abuse of Interpretation in Biography', by Professor Newman White, and 'The Humanistic Basis of Biographical Interpretation', by Professor A. M. Wilson. Though the lecturers view their subject from different angles, as shown, for instance, in the treatment of Shelley by M. Maurois and Professor White, their papers are complementary rather than contradictory, and, as a whole, provide a concise and comprehensive survey of the biographer's responsibilities. In the second group, under the title 'Authenticity and Attribution of Written Matter', Mr. G. E. Dawson describes some interesting cases of detection connected with books of the Folger Shakespeare Library, including a possible addition to extant Shakespeare signatures still under investigation. Wider and more general problems of 'Authenticity and Attribution in the Jacobean and Caroline Drama' are dealt with by Professor G. E. Bentley, and Mr. Herbert Davis contributes an admirable paper on 'The Canon of Swift'. Of more specialized interest are the two concluding papers devoted to the psychology of creative literature—the one, on 'Personality and Creative Literature', by Mr. H. A. Murray, being based on extensive psychological experiments investigating this relation, the other, on 'Poetry and Science', by Mr. Hayakawa, representing literature as a form of 'symbolic strategy' whereby the creative writer provides himself and his readers with an 'aid to sanity'. Though primarily intended for students following courses in the different groups, the series as a whole supplies a readable and stimulating introduction to critical method.

B. E. C. DAVIS.

SUMMARY OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

BY KATHLEEN TILLOTSON

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